THE COMMONWEAL

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RELIGION IN POLITICS

BY HIS Sunday speech in Detroit last week, which he humorously referred to as being a sermon, and in which he quoted approvingly from utterances on the subject of social justice from Pope Pius XI, the Labor Day message of the Federal Council of the Protestant Churches, and the Social Justice Commission of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, Governor Roosevelt, we believe, performed a great and very much needed act of public service. Whatever may be the outcome of the presidential campaign, and irrespective of the merits or demerits of either of the two chief candidates, or of their parties, Governor Roosevelt's Detroit address will stand out as the most noteworthy and praiseworthy utterance of the 1932 campaign. For it brought religion into politics in a wholly appropriate and beneficial manner. It has brought fundamental principles of moral teaching, as laid down and promoted by the three great religious influences in America —the Catholic Church, the majority of the Protestant churches, and the Jewish faith—fairly and squarely before the consideration of the nation as part of the great debate now proceeding in the political arena.

Ordinarily, religion plays—or is supposed to play—a part in American politics of a particularly odious and undesirable sort. The slogan of "keep religion out of politics," which so many politicians use either mistakenly or hypocritically, is an utterly unworkable proposition. Religion cannot be kept out of politics. It never has been kept out of politics. Bigotry should be excluded from politics. The surreptitious, underground tricks and deals of politicians to make use of religion—in the narrow sense of capturing the votes of organized groups of church members for themselves, or/and alienate those votes from their opponents—should be done away with. The complete and desirable right of religious leaders to do their plain duty of expressing those fundamental ethical principles which should guide all forms of decent politics should, however, be welcomed and encouraged by all sensible statesmen. And this is particularly true at the present time. There is only one school of political philosophy that has the logical right to deny, ignore or repudiate the practical employment of religious influence in dealing with the social problems of our age. That school proves its consistency by its actions. Integral or real Socialism, which is Communism, by basing its whole theory upon materialism, and by its consequent doctrine of economic determinism, and denial of all spir-

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itual motives, is that exception to all existing schools of political philosophy. But, certainly, in the United States, excluding the small (but growing) minority of organized Communists, and the larger but unorganized number of individual materialists, there is a common agreement among most Republicans, and Democrats, and independent voters, that moral and ethical principles are—or at least should be—superior to mere expediency, and to all (so-called) "laws" of economics, "the iron law of supply and demand," and so forth. Considerations of humanity are still judged to be higher and better than considerations of power and profit—whether power and profit are regarded in personal terms, or in national terms.

Privately, nearly all political leaders, and publicists who discuss politics, admit their belief in the primacy of spiritual principles. Sometimes they pay lip-homage to such a belief. And at all times—so we at least hold, although it is very difficult to offer tangible proof of our statement—in actual political and social methods and processes this belief finds a partial expression, a limited and halting and inadequate expression, to be sure, but still considerable.

But it is not enough. Due to the almost complete absence of a consistent, and persistent, ethical influence in the secular press, the religious teachings that should permeate and control our political and social problems, can only operate casually and occasionally. The press will publish the *news*—in accordance with its own standard of what is news—when the Pope, or the Federal Council of Protestant Churches, or the Social Justice Commission of the Jewish Rabbis utters a notable statement. The press will comment upon such statements. All that is to the good—but it is not enough. Certainly our secular press does not accept the views of the religious leaders as their own. Our secular editors do not steadily and logically press home upon their readers the consequences which should be drawn—and put into social and political action—from the ideals of social justice proclaimed by the leaders of religious thought. But they will begin to do so more and more when and if political and social leaders boldly and plainly discuss their problems and their programs in the light of definite principles laid down by religious leaders, as Governor Roosevelt has just done. At least, they will discuss them; even if they do not always approve them. At any rate, as such discussion proceeds they will begin to learn the truth that has been so generally disregarded since the modern industrial era began, the truth that both economics, and politics—in the real sense of that much abused term: in the sense that means the organization and promotion of methods to achieve the true order of public welfare—are inseparable from religion, and that only religion can be safely trusted as a guide, not merely to reach a better world after death, but to make a better world while still we live.

It is this deep human meaning of religion which gives such poignant meaning to the Pope's last encyclical letter on conditions in Mexico. He warns the whole world once more, as he has repeatedly done, of the danger to civilization that is heightened and inflamed by such attacks upon the rights of the Church as we are witnessing today in Mexico, Russia and in Spain. It will not do for other nations than those three to stand by idle, and unconcerned, while atheists and Communists, having seized political and economic power, do all they can to destroy religion. The infection of that spirit is spreading throughout the world. It is the Orthodox Church, the Catholic Church, the Protestant bodies and the religious Jews who today are crushed in Russia. It is the Catholic Church in Mexico and Spain which now are suffering. But tomorrow it will be all forms of religion that will be attacked openly, as even now they are insidiously attacked, elsewhere in the Western world, unless religion boldly enters the arena of public life and plays that part which Leo XIII declared that it was its duty to play, when, forty years ago, he inaugurated the program of Catholic Social Action: "The Catholic Church has for her own immediate and natural purpose the saving of souls. . . . Yet in regard to things temporal she is the source of benefits as manifold and great as if the chief end of her existence were to ensure the prospering of our earthly life."

WEEK BY WEEK

Political Poker Abroad

EUROPE, possibly responding to suggestion from campaign-ridden U. S. A., has indulged in not a little political poker during the past week. At the disarmament conference, which the German foreign minister left post-haste, M. Herriot's supposedly important speech turned out to be a rather perfunctory eulogy of the American demand for peace. Between the lines one may read the ardent desire of Frenchmen now also lashed by the waves of depression to have peace, and the quite obvious truth that having Britain at one's side now implies a diligent rehearsal of the best of Briand's rôles. But the English themselves have witnessed a Cabinet upheaval, as a result of which Mr. MacDonald finds himself the hub of a conservative universe. Though the trouble arose over the tariff policy endorsed at Ottawa, the issue which decided the exit of Mr. Snowden and his free-trade friends is the whole program of nationalistic reconstruction. In Germany the effort of the military party to get everything possible out of the maneuvers of General von Schleicher may lead to better days for the moderate parties. Though the Reich is as one man when it comes to the question of inequality, it still remains pretty solidly opposed to a restoration of those glorious days when every mother's son majored in the goose step. The most notable event of the week, perhaps, was Mr. De Valera's sensible and vigorous little address to the Council of the League of Nations. Seldom has the world's conviction been so frankly expressed.

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GANDHI is reported to be smiling as he sips orange juice and listens to the traditional music of his country.

Mr. Gandhi's Orange Juice

Though still in jail, the "little man" has won a quite astonishing victory for what can only be described as an ideal. Racial groups and castes had growled fiercely at one another during several months, and the British government decided so to modify the law as to give the "untouchables" a right to vote separately. To Gandhi this seemed both a deft move to consolidate social animosities in India, and a challenge to his conception of human brotherhood. Wherefore he calmly announced that a hunger strike would begin forthwith, and that he would eat nothing until the rulers of His Majesty's Empire repealed the law. During six days he kept his word, throwing all India into a veritable turmoil of repentance and calling forth the last reserves of British sagacity. For what can one do when a man who represents the people blithely prefers death to surrender? This act definitely makes Gandhi nearly all he ever claimed to be. He is not a fanatic, since the object he served was quite objective, reasonable and good. Nor can he any longer be even so much as accused of wishing to serve himself. Across the centuries, Gandhi joins forces with Socrates. And the "practical" man of our particular civilization wishes to heaven that he could unearth the same force that operates so imperturbably beside the Ganges.

LA VIE CATHOLIQUE, of Paris, reminds us that this is the centenary year of two illustrious masters of the sermon—Bourdaloue and Fléchier.

Pulpit Mastery

Different as these great priests were, the Providence which ordained their birth in the same year now sees that their significance for the modern world is similar. Concern for adequate pulpit oratory is reviving, due largely to a genuine increase of spiritualized intellectualism; and of course the standard set by France during the seventeenth century remains an ever serviceable guide to what is proper and excellent. Even more important is the fact that history now reveals, after a careful reëxamination of the evidence, how completely the utterance of a man like Bourdaloue reposes upon his own fervor and practice. Nothing he uttered was without an anchorage in his personal life. Of Fléchier the Abbé Brémond remarks that he was especially moving and effective as a preacher of simple sermons to ordinary congregations. Bourdaloue also was primarily a pastor, treating all with exquisite tenderness and concerned with avoiding all things which, as excesses, might prove injurious. It is often felt that the sermon is a literary form which most people are eager to ignore. But one has only to bear in mind the influence which Bourdaloue, for example, has exerted throughout the centuries, to realize that great pulpit oratory can reëcho for centuries after the speaker's voice is silent in death, bringing new generations under the spell of the Christian miracle.

AS THE political disturbance moves into October, interest is naturally turning from what the candidates are actually doing to what the voter is thinking.

The Way the Wind Blows

Mr. Roosevelt has already done the one thing needful, by demonstrating that he is nobody's fool and everybody's friend. Among those cited as evidence for the second contention are personalities as diverse as Messrs. Smith and Hearst. There is nothing in particular that Mr. Hoover can do excepting to pump as much enthusiasm as possible into the veins of his party. After all, he need convert nobody. His efforts can very properly be concentrated upon keeping doubtful troops in line. The results to date can be estimated pretty well from the "straws." Since we have it on expert authority that the *Literary Digest* tabulations normally err a little in favor of conservatism, it is interesting to observe that the figures are running in a direction pretty nearly opposite to the trend of 1928. The issue of October 1, the last available as this note is written, indicates that the vote in eleven states, mostly Eastern, is neck and neck, with Roosevelt slightly in the lead. Newspaper polls confirm this report. But it is still far from the fateful first Tuesday after the first Monday, and you can never tell what may suddenly happen.

THOSE interested in the growth of the guild-medicine idea will take pleasure in the recent speech of Mr. Edward A. Filene before the Yale University Clinical Congress.

Mr. Filene on Guild Medicine

Mr. Filene goes straight to the heart of the matter by speaking of the plight of the man of average income today who, as most of us have the best reason to know, is taxed disproportionately in his medical bills to support the system of experts, laboratory research and equipment, and elaborate hospital care. That this man is entitled to "the best preventive and curative medical care at a price within his means," is self-evident. Not so evident is the method of bringing about this millennium, with (in Mr. Filene's words) "full medical examination twice a year, a complete check-up on the slightest ailment, medical attention whenever necessary, the advice of specialists," all "at a prearranged, standard fee based upon mortality and health figures." The word "guild," of course, merely designates some form of health insurance, in which the payment of a small sum annually by a very large number of persons would finance medical groups so adequately that they could give all needed medical care to the communities in their respective charges. It leaves untouched such questions as the basis of organization of each unit, whether by counties, states or newly determined divisions; as well as the more fundamental question of the nature and extent of the contract between the subscriber to a medical "guild" and the physicians who would compose it. In a word, there is a great deal to be worked out, even on paper, before guild medicine can even be tried. But it

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is the one logical answer to the chaos and inefficiency of the present, if we are to avoid socialized medicine administered from a governmental bureau, and it is fine to have men of Mr. Filene's standing taking a hand.

One in the Camera's Eye

CURIOUS chapters in the world history of the film —how it invades, unites, touches, standardizes, changes —are always coming to light. Yet we, personally, are always being struck by them in some fresh spot of wonder. We do not believe we are among those who need to be assured that many ties of belief and even of taste bind the most diverse peoples; and we certainly are not among those (if there be any) who fail to find surcease from care in the antics of the Hollywood team of Laurel and Hardy, or of that clown in spectacles whose commodity is good, clean fun. Yet it touches our imagination to read that, on their recent visit abroad, Laurel and Hardy were all but torn limb from limb by souvenir-hunting enthusiasts in, of all places, Edinburgh; and we find it evocative indeed to be told, as we were by a savant returned from Russia, how a young Communist intellectual met his suggestion that they attend a touted propagandist play in Moscow, with the ardent counter-suggestion: "Let's go and see Garold Lloyd!" Somewhat the same feeling, not wholly pleasant yet certainly exciting, comes to us when we read the news despatches from Budapest. The horsemen, swineherds and cowboys of the Hungarian Great Plain, it seems, have developed a mass ambition to star before the camera. Immemorial masters of bridle and lariat, and, in their embroideries, plumes and skin coats, as picturesque as a tenderfoot's dream, they have been discovered by German and French producers, and have received advances which they wish above all things to reciprocate. But at this point an unfamiliar element enters the story. The Debreczin County Council has, so to speak, forbidden the banns. It declares, in the spirit of Plato, that the business of herders is to herd. No brass bands or chamber of commerce congratulations have been forthcoming, to tell the world that the local boys have made good. They are ordered, instead, to go back to the Plain and not neglect their work. Shall we confess that, though we know they would be a great accession to pictures, we hope the Council wins out?

Budgets and Playgrounds

COMMISSIONER Mulrooney's views on the causes and cures of juvenile delinquency have received a good deal of merited attention, in these columns and elsewhere. But they are views that will always bear repetition, especially in times of pinch and frantic economy like the present, when the less immediate items of public budgets everywhere are in danger, and the investment in imponderables like child health and happiness may suffer correspondingly. It is a good thing, therefore, to have the commissioner repeat, in the National Recreation Association's magazine, certain vital facts in this field. He speaks, as often before, of the disturbing youthfulness of suspects and first degree offenders today, and indicates that it is usually the lack of proper formative recreation, of sufficient clubs and playgrounds, that causes these boys to drift into delinquency. Recognizing that "new capital outlays on parks and open spaces" cannot be looked for at present, he yet asks that budget-cutting generally spare the program already in existence. No one would question these statements, just as no one would controvert President Hoover's fine plea for the child at the recent White House Conference. But it is well for us all to be reminded that these are not merely academic truths, but truths that we may neglect only at our peril.

At Omaha

THE National Conference of Catholic Charities recently concluded at Omaha, Nebraska, was, appropriate to the times, distinguished by the largest attendance of Catholic social workers ever assembled at such a convention in this country. Here were shock troops in the war against immediate, very real need. Diocesan directors of Catholic charities, priests identified with charity work, members of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, several hundred nuns from charitable institutions and hospitals in all sections of the United States, and representatives of various other groups and lay workers were in the army that gathered for a few days to take council together and then disperse back to their tasks. Three thousand persons were at the initial general session. The Most Reverend Thomas W. Drumm, Bishop of Des Moines, in his sermon at the solemn opening Mass said, "Today the Catholic Church in every country of the world, except Soviet Russia, maintains thousands of hospitals, orphanages, homes for the aged and asylums. This work is being carried on in America and other nations in the spirit of charity taught by Christ." This seems to us the important, the real, immediate thing emphasized by the conference as a kind of common denominator of all the excellent, realistic things said there. It is the crown and sign of faith and every layman, no matter how near or remote from the actual struggles of charity he may be, must rejoice at it, and take courage from it, and rededicate himself to serving as best he can the destitute around him.

Canadian Sisters

THE SISTERS of Service of Canada celebrated in August the first decade of their organization and we should like to note appreciatively their splendid work. It is characteristic of the zeal of the various sisterhoods not only in the great and well known orders but also in the smaller and newer orders that arise to meet special exigencies. Immigrants coming to the shores of Canada, lonely and sickly settlers and thousands of children in sparsely settled sections of the dominion have been the special care of the Sisters of Service. Over two thousand boats were met

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by the Sisters and over four hundred thousand bewildered, and possibly frightened, strangers in the new land received courteous welcome and assistance. Approximately a tenth of these were provided with hostelry. Safe accommodations were found for nine thousand girls. Over three thousand patients were admitted to the Sisters' hospitals, of whom only 1,069 were Catholics. Catechism was taught by Sisters visiting small mission churches, and for thousands of children on isolated homesteads, correspondence courses in catechism were conducted, the Sisters sending out the lessons and then correcting the examination papers that were mailed in to them. Fewer than a hundred devoted women performed all this. How they could do it can be appreciated only by those who know at first hand the smiling, unhurried and efficient lives characteristic of nuns.

Law and Prohibition

WE ARE pleased to see that Jouett Shouse, president of the Association against the Prohibition Amendment, is campaigning for simple repeal of the prohibition amendment; or to state the positive side, for the recognition and enforcement of existing law. We have consistently maintained that if an improvement is to be made in law abiding in our country, there has to be a simplification of the legal code. A great gain from the prohibition experiment will have been achieved, if it shall have conclusively demonstrated that good government, and the best of intentions, involve more than mere law-making. This is a matter of concern not only to those who would like to be able to have wine at their tables without defying the American Constitution, or those who believe that the expense of regulating the liquor traffic should be borne by that traffic itself. It is of concern to those conscientious citizens who labor a little unhappily under their title as wets, who earnestly want to contribute to the cause of temperance. Mr. Shouse is reëmphasizing what we have again and again declared, that the Webb-Kenyon Act, which the Supreme Court as recently as May, 1932, held to be still in force, fully protects the sovereignty of those states desiring prohibition of the most rigid character. Here is the law of the land on this issue; it has been repeatedly clarified by our supreme tribunal and it is a prime service to good government that the law of the land shall be respected rather than emasculated and confused by the passage of more legal phraseology.

Whether or Not

WEATHER and the poor we have always with us, but sometimes more and sometimes less. Of course the old question of whether a raincoat is better than an umbrella, or perhaps more stylish, or less effete, has never been settled and is troublesome in its way; to the poor, however, the weather is something more serious. Food and shelter a body must have, no matter if the sun shines or not, and if cold comes, another struggle is added. It is with real relief, therefore, that we note that the present incumbents of the federal Weather Bureau promise a warm winter. For those millions for whom life has become a first-hand contest with the elementals, this is no doubt more cheering than an optimistic report from the Department of Commerce that the woolen business is picking up. Records show, says Mr. Joseph M. Kincer, chief of the agricultural meteorology division of the Weather Bureau, that weather tends to follow currents of a few cold years and then a few warm years and a change from one cycle to another has in the past always come gradually. There has been a gradual upward swing in the mean temperature (mean is here used in its technical sense) since 1926, reports Mr. Kincer. By a coincidence—that is, we assume it is a coincidence—it is on the 1926 mean of 250 stocks that Professor Irving Fisher bases his stock market index. Every month this year, Mr. Kincer continues, has brought temperatures ranging above the fifty-year mean average, which should indicate, according to the charts, an all-time weather high for this winter.

DECLINE OF THE PROGRESSIVES

AFTER Maine, Wisconsin. Unless all signs are wrong, it is the second state which has told us most about the citizen's mind at this stage of the game. The severe defeat administered to the Progressive candidates at the recent primaries ends one political era in the Badger State. Why did this happen and what does it mean? We believe the point to be of some importance because the legacy left by Bob La Follette constituted the only sizable nucleus of a possible third party movement discernible in recent history. And there are additional, no less interesting reasons for having a look at Wisconsin.

In the last issue of THE COMMONWEAL, Mr. Charles Willis Thompson declared, on the basis of a statement by the Governor-elect, that Maine had gone Democratic not because of its wet sentiment but simply because times are hard and the people disgruntled. Just as much can be said, and with added force, concerning the defeat of the La Follettes. Their "movement" has always been frankly wet. Nowhere on earth has the maker of home brew been more certain of the friendly interest of his rulers. And whatever other sins may be laid at the door of Progressivism, indifference to good government is not among them. Wisconsin has had, if anything, too much good government—a luxury excellent in itself but, like the admirable German bureaucracy, inclined to bore the citizen into thinking he has been cheated out of something. No. The tide has turned against the LaFollettes because money is tight, people out of work, and omnipresent state aid expensive.

Old Bob, blending integrity with shrewdness and oratory, took a state which had been in the habit of sending land-grabbers and deadbeats to Congress, gave it the vitamins of his own purpose, and produced a commonwealth which watched its collective affairs as

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seriously as a fond mother scrutinizes her sixth grader's scholastic performance. Commentators have not yet sufficiently noticed how personal an achievement this was, built upon the will and the skill of a man who had in him qualities of leadership rarely matched. Many energies flowed to his assistance as if by magic —Teutonic love of order, Polish readiness to work hard and live frugally, Irish enthusiasm—but all of these would have drifted to centers like Senator Moses or Jimmie Walker if Bob had not attracted them to his great self. That is why the legacy had inevitably to be a family matter. Nevertheless, by a remarkable coincidence, this family was by no means a collection of squabbling minors. Both the younger La Follettes have proved their mettle, and may confidently be placed beside any of their rivals in public office. But it was after all only a dynasty. Such additions of leadership as it could make had to come, not from the ranks of men recruited for important business positions, but from the small fry of the professions. Senator Blaine is a representative instance. Just a little man to begin with, no conceivable opportunity could have made him anything else. His value lay in the fact that his presence in office meant that countless thousands of similarly little men were being represented. Blaine has been a photostat copy of the average Wisconsin citizen.

Business men glanced more than a little superciliously at an organization which made so little use of them. Yet, though they manfully got behind Mr. Walter Kohler and pushed hard, the Progressives, after a slight slump, were coming back stronger than ever when it was discovered that jobs were fewer and taxes higher. The La Follette efforts to solve this familiar problem were unsuccessful and had to be so. On the one hand, their kind of state simply couldn't let people starve. On the other hand, the effort to keep them from starving raised the same kind of problem as beset Mr. Hoover when he, minus the relief issue, began to see if the budget could be balanced. Valiantly but in vain the Progressives as a unit struggled in Washington to raise some measure of federal assistance. They got as far as the Wagner Bill, but that wasn't far enough to help the situation in the Badger State. As a result certain of the measures adopted there were probably erroneous. At least we find ourselves in substantial agreement on this point with Mr. Elmer Davis, who tells the purchasers of the October *Harpers'* that construction projects failed to provide enough relief while a compromise tax measure alienated nearly everyone without thoroughly satisfying many.

Anyhow the result is evident in the vote. Kohler defeated La Follette, and Chapple beat Blaine. Of course, lots of things have been said wildly in the aftermath. In a big nation-wide spread, the Chicago *Tribune* argues that the "Reds" have been beaten in *Tribune* territory, accusing the La Follettes of having sponsored a platform urging "confiscation of private property." This must of course be viewed as just another one of the meanderings of what is almost the world's worst newspaper. The La Follettes have never stood on any such program. Nor did more than a handful of the people who voted for Kohler actually accuse them of any such thing. There was just one way in which the kind of propaganda disseminated by the *Tribune* did hurt. By suggesting a parallel between Mr. Brookhart of Iowa (guilty of nepotism) and the La Follette dynasty, the press did uncover a spot at which Progressivism is vulnerable. Nor could the time-honored attacks upon the "radicalism" of the university bear much fruit. That not all has been wholly sane at the institution presided over by Dr. Glenn Frank is hardly news. It has its share of wild ideas which the people generally resent even when they fail to understand them. But the citizens of Wisconsin have lived with their university so long that most of them are now quite content if it plays a good game of football.

In our humble opinion—and on this subject we claim to speak with both some love and some knowledge—the upset marks the end of old-fashioned progressive Republicanism in Wisconsin, and for two reasons: first, the almost destined inability of Progressivism to make room for men trained in the industries which have arisen throughout the state during the past twenty years, and upon whose leadership the welfare of a growing population depends; second (and more especially), the failure of the La Follettes to fit into any program of national action. Since the first point has already been dealt with, we shall concentrate on the second. The logical end of the Wisconsin idea was a third, liberal party. How could it make common cause with a Repulicanism differently orientated? Of course there has long been a small insurgent group in Washington, but its total importance at any given time would be hard to underestimate. Could the Progressives have turned Democratic? Not on your life. The war had created so much resentment against Mr. Wilson that any idea of veering toward his party was out of the question. Later the Tammany affiliations of Al Smith were profoundly suspect in a commonwealth where the dream of clean government has lived side by side with non-explosive but very real religious differences.

A state cannot in the long run isolate itself from the national scene. Today everybody is convinced that, however much can be accomplished through honest state and municipal government, the big stakes are being played for in the national capital. Wisconsin is seeking to effect a tie-up there. And so the moment is remarkably propitious for a Democratic party headed by a man who talks liberalism but also tax reform, industrial reorganization, and repeal. Unless all signs fail, Wisconsin is making a bee-line for the Roosevelt column. This is, from several points of view, too bad. La Follette's achievement has meant so distinct a gain for the cause of honest politics, one hates to be witnessing its decline. But you can't keep a good man down. While waiting to see whether this maxim is borne out in the Badger State, it is possible to reflect anew upon the mental effects of hard times.

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DISTRIBUTISM AGAIN

By G. K. CHESTERTON

SOME time ago the editor of THE COMMONWEAL did me the honor to insert some remarks of mine on Distributism, which I had intended to follow with further remarks on Distributism. I fear it was a very considerable time ago, but I can only plead that the general block in the traffic, which has complicated so much of the world's work of late, has held up this particular purpose of mine in a long procession of promises; some of them dealing with books that ought to have been published and pulped long ago. I can also plead, and I attach much more importance to the plea, that I am now sending off this hasty essay in some haste, having heard with the utmost horror the suggestion of THE COMMONWEAL itself being in some peril, even of its own most beneficent existence. I can only say that the loss of THE COMMONWEAL would be colossal, not only to America, but to England, and to any number of places where intelligent men want the real issue between a Christian and a pagan culture debated in an intelligent way. Most of my own practical, or rather unpractical, efforts have to be devoted to keeping alive a much less important and much more rickety journalistic enterprise, on somewhat similar lines; but on the impossible supposition that THE COMMONWEAL could ever die, I should certainly like to be in at the death, or preferably before the death.

It is so long since my last article appeared, that it will be well to cast back to general considerations of the nature of Distributism; leaving for a third occasion, if it be possible, the more detailed application. Distributists have set forth several plans of legislation and legal reform for the encouragement of small property, covering questions of the attack on trusts, the taxation of contracts concentrating wealth and many other expedients. But I am inclined just now to attach much greater importance to a much simpler and more direct movement that has already begun in the English shires, for the setting up of free families on their own farms. It is very largely the work of Catholics; and in many cases, especially of Catholic priests. In order to understand it, therefore, we must throw our thoughts back to the foundations of the Distributist ideal, as they exist in philosophy, and more especially in religion.

My friend Mr. Hoffman Nickerson recently wrote to THE COMMONWEAL an indignant protest against what he considered a compromise with Communism; asking how it could be reconciled with the admitted doctrine of Saint Thomas, reënforced by Leo XIII, to the effect that a man will normally look after his own property better than other people's. I do not quarrel with him about that; I do not indeed intervene at all in that particular quarrel; it is probable that Mr. Nickerson is right in saying that this primary principle is not affected by the admitted evils of the present system. But what strikes me is the extent to which this primary principle is in itself a condemnation of the present system.

Capitalism, almost as much as Communism, is in practice a system in which the normal man does not look after his own property; though he constantly looks after somebody else's. If it be an unnatural or untraditional or unorthdox condition that property should be tended by those who do not own it, then the whole modern system of machinery and mass production and industrialism, of the sort that claims to be individualism, is in exactly that degree unnatural and untraditional and unorthodox; it is all in exactly that sense condemned by Saint Thomas and the Popes. For the commonest object of capitalist society is a man minding somebody else's property; whether it is a mechanic making a car for a manufacturer, or a chauffeur minding a car for a millionaire, or even a secretary or a butler ringing up to fetch the car from the club. The disproportion between the few actual possessors and the myriad makers, minders, menders and caretakers has become so colossal, that for all practical purposes the whole life of the community consists of minding other people's property. It is obvious that a general moral statement, whether made by Saint Thomas or by Leo XIII or by anybody else, must be supposed to refer to the general state of mankind and the condition of the normal man. And our society is so abnormal that the normal man never dreams of having the normal occupation of looking after his own property. When he chooses a trade, he chooses one of the ten thousand trades that involve looking after other people's property. The son of an ordinary modern family, among the common people, may joke about his intention to become a millionaire, but he does not really act on it, any more than on the intention to become a marquis—or for that matter a mandarin in China. He assumes that work will mean work on materials belonging to others; even if it is very high-class work in the way of engineering or scientific adjustment or even architecture or decoration. We are therefore confronted with a condition in which Saint Thomas and the Pope are almost as flatly contradicted by capitalism as they could possibly be by Communism. And indeed it is obvious that Saint Thomas, and the Pope teaching in the tradition of Saint Thomas, were not really thinking of a world even remotely resembling the world in which we are unhappily doomed to dwell. Indeed, by the very nature of the historic origins, and the roots of the religious story, they were bound to refer back to somewhat simpler conditions such as are implied in the ten commandments, in the story of Naboth or in the parable of Nathan.

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But perhaps the simplest comparison, and the highest authority, is that which they could find in a well-known parable of the New Testament. This shows a deliberate comparison in the conscious form of a contrast; and perhaps illustrates the fact that the age of the Gospels was an age of transition between the simpler traditional life and the more indirect and tangled later life. I mean the passage in which Jesus Christ Himself compared the shepherd with the hireling: the man who loves his own sheep with the man who merely looks after somebody else's. "The hireling fleeth because he is a hireling"; and if we translate this, on the one side, by saying that the hireling grumbles, strikes, caws canny, organizes unions, raises revolutions, votes Labor or goes Bolshevist—we must recognize in a sense the reasonableness of his action in the very peril of the results of his action. He is doing all this because, in defiance of Saint Thomas and the Catholic teaching, he has not been left to mind his own business; he has been told to mind somebody else's business. Exactly as the bad shepherd was told to mind somebody else's sheep. "But the good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep." This passage is of vital importance in this debate, because it not only points out that all hiring has certain dangers, but it also points out that true possession has certain virtues; nay, has certain sacrifices and surrenders. These two truths have both been so completely covered up by the sophistries of the rich in recent times, that it will probably come as a surprise, even to some Catholics, to be told that they are bound up in the Gospel or part of the teaching of Saint Thomas. But they are both true, and they are both really involved in the text. The text about the hireling fleeing, translated into modern language, means that a proletarian society is in its nature inefficient; that a mere wage-system must be weak and unworkable. The text about the good shepherd means that property is not only possession; it is also honor, and even death on the field of honor.

As things are now, those criticizing the small beginnings of practical Distributism must in fairness compare them with the large collapses of a quite unpractical capitalism. The great industrialist is now hardly in a position to boast that we have not yet rebuilt quite so widely as he has ruined. We have never in answering capitalists claimed that our little businesses are yet on the grand scale of their more impressive bankruptcies: or dared to deny that they can lay waste the world with a rapidity and efficiency greater than any with which we can hope to restore it.

> Let not Ambition mock our useful toil,
> Our humble joys and destiny obscure,

nor Grandeur hear with a disdainful smile the short but simple annals of the Distributist League or the Catholic Land Movement. Admitting that most of the work of reclamation must be on a small scale, where so much chaos has followed the attempt to do everything on a large scale, it is already true that though the reform consists of small things, it largely consists of a large number of small things. In England and Scotland at least, one part of the work bears a marked resemblance to the work which was done in the dark ages after the general collapse of the Roman imperial civilization. There is especially present in it a paradox extremely typical of Christian history. The reëstablishment of a real private property is largely attempted under the inspiration of monks, or friars, who have renounced private property. The reëstablishment of normal family life on the land has been the work of priests who have themselves renounced marriage. Now that paradox existed in exactly the same fashion when something had to be saved from the wreck of the pagan empire. That is what makes even the most pagan or secular historians say that the monasteries saved farming and other crafts in the days of the barbarian invasions. And the fight of the frair or the poor priest for the very rights he has himself surrendered, does very exactly echo the great paradox of the Gospel: of the Good Shepherd Whose only ownership is proved in His own death.

Picture

I saw today some painter's dream,
A woman of old Italy,
Deigning against a blank of gold,
Her flesh, a heraldry.

Her eyes had cressets in their dark;
Her mouth's a drift of pimpernels.
One ear is turned as if some thought
Had left a trance of bells.

The long stiff fingers are hail-white,
Her neck runs full and pure and bare,
And deeper than a humble bee's
The black bloom of her hair.

Some empery breathes from her skin,
And oh, the languor of her state
Would make a pagan genuflect,
A drab grow delicate.

But those incredible young hands
How could they ever sweep or tuck?
And could those grave princessly paps
Give any infant suck?

No passion passes that gold wall.
What world is there but hers inside?
She is too great for insolence,
Too unaware for pride.

I long to shake her feudal calm,
To tumble each untided vein.
And yet to what might she awake—
A narcissan disdain?

So regally inadequate!
An impudence of pity swells.
She cannot live; she cannot die.
Blue exile, dream of bells.

EILEEN DUGGAN.

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MY SEASONABLE PATHS

By ROBERT SPARKS WALKER

EVERY path is a poem, simple, pure and sweet. Peace, progress, rest and recreation are some of the good things that a path proclaims. A path suggests progress because no one can follow a path without pressing forward. It proclaims peace because wherever there is a path, it brings quietude. There the mind may throw off the turbulent accumulations from the office or factory; rest, because peace brings rest. Indeed, peace is mental rest, and no path has ever been made but urges its traveler to stop and rest. Wherever a path leads, there is recreation. Birds sing among trees threaded by paths; flowers bloom in season; leaves rustle under moving feet; crickets chirp in the dry grasses and leaves, and, mayhap, pebbles abound. These beget simplicity of life and manners and bequeath humility to the soul.

Today it snows. I must hurry along the woodland path and attend to the sheep which are feeding on the shreds of mummied cornstalks. I enter the woods. Here and there a pine tree rises greenishly great before me in the most conspicuous places, but the oaks, chestnuts and hickory trees are bare. The snowflakes fall profusely, sifted through the tree tops, and my environment is one great milky-way, flecked with a mass of crystal stars. The wind blows stintingly, and I draw my cloak a little tighter about me. The fragments of pine twigs, oak limbs, dead foliage, stumps and logs begin to don white aprons and caps. I follow my path. It leads on and on. Here and there the mice are scurrying about as if to get their household affairs in order before the snow is too deep. Their limber tails drop across my snow-covered path, and their soft feet make odd-looking etchings that lead to a nearby hollow stump. My path guides me beneath a tall pine. The broken pieces of dry cones and old needles, mixed with snowflakes, fall upon me. I observe a crossbill busily bursting the pine cones, seeking a seed that the wind failed to startle. All is quiet, but ever and anon something breaks loose and lets an accumulation of snow fall to the ground. A careful search reveals a flicker pecking off loose pieces of bark that have been filled with snow. He lets the mass tumble to the earth and some of it hits me squarely around my collar.

Soon my path begins to fade, and when it is effaced what shall I do? As my body penetrates a strip of woodland, I cross a wagon road and let down the wooden bars where a score of hungry sheep meet me, and greet me with a hullabaloo of baas! I gently tap each one on its head as it passes through to seek the old path now hidden from sight. They take to the snow-covered woods, and I follow close behind them. It is with wonderful accuracy that these four-footed friends of mine can follow an invisible something that I cannot, unless I keep in their hoofprints. Without the least confusion they pick their way, winding in and out and, as I pass a number of well-known giant trees along the way, I know the sheep are keeping the path. How they manage to do it, I shall not try to explain. Their memory is better than mine. I follow faithfully until they lead me through the snow safely home again to warmer quarters. But scarcely do I finish my path-feast in snowtime when I awaken to find that winter is gone and it is springtime again.

It is a peculiarly rich feeling that comes to one when he is following a path. It is a warm day. I go along another path as light-hearted as a child. The woodlands echo with the voices of the wood thrush and the vireo. I pass on. My soul takes up the music of the path that leads me through the forest. Approaching me are three fat cows. One is followed closely by a calf, whose lips are twinkling with liquid jewels. I step out of the path beside an Indian pink that holds a blazing torch. The cows give me a kindly look and go on. There is a sharp curve in the trail and the timber is too dense to see beyond. As I venture around the bend, I come face to face with a shepherd-dog, who, on seeing me, lifts his ears in surprise, but does not bark. He comes to me when I speak gently to him. He pauses long enough to scent my palms, and hurries on. "Shep, Shep!" comes a cry, and immediately two bare feet are patting around the second curve. The speeding lad holds a flying squirrel in one hand and a long straight sourwood stick in the other. His face is electrified with joy, and he holds the animal away from his body. Shep stops a moment to scent the boy's living trophy, but the dog is interested in nothing now but the cows. He jumps up at the boy, and then follows the cows. Even a dog like Shep knows the value of looking a boy or a man squarely in the face when talking.

I stay with my path, but stop long enough to gather some Indian pinks, bluets, saxifrage, crinkleroot, pussy-toes and buttercups. The stems of some are far too short to hold very well, and I cannot carry them conveniently. I am constantly letting them slip one by one to the ground. But I will just wait until I reach the gravelly knoll, at the base of which is a running brook. There I can find a flower with a stem long enough so that I can hold it tightly. The azaleas may have some other kinds of flowers growing in their beds, and I shall not touch them. Honybees and bee-like flies continually alight on my plucked flowers, and they must feel sad to see their nectar cups destroyed. The insects are so persistent in coming to my flowers that I wonder if they are just taking this opportunity of getting a free ride.

But see what is coming to meet me in my springtime path! It is a crocodile-like creature, a fence lizard, and as he draws near his timidity causes him to quit the

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path and he steals up a pine tree. The bark rattles as he climbs and pricks it with his claws. Clinging tightly, the lizard stops and peeps curiously around to see if I am going on, or if I am determined to follow him!

On my return with the blossoming trophies of the woodland path, I come to the orchard path where the air is impregnated with perfume, and there is a solemn roar of insect voices. I breathe this sweet fragrance with childlike joy, and where the path quits the orchard for the garden, I find myself bathed in the elysian scent of crab-apple blossoms.

In the midst of my path I observe a tiny well, and I wonder what on earth it can be. From the ground I pluck a long, stiff grass stem, with which I begin probing the burrow. When it strikes the bottom at a depth of eight inches, I release my hand, and immediately the stem begins to quiver. It is moving upward, and I am so much reminded of fishing in the brook that I give the stem a quick jerk. I feel something dragging behind, and behold what a wonderful land-fish I have caught! It lets go of the straw and drops to the ground, shuffling about in an irritable manner. You ugly looking rascal! Who are you, and how did you come by that big hump on your back? I look at it again, and then I recall having seen the tiger-beetle chasing insects in the same beaten path last summer. This is one of her children who is shrewd enough to dig a deep burrow well adapted for catching flies and other insects. I assist the tiger-worm on its return to the burrow, and it backs down into the hole as if it is in a perfectly good humor.

When I take to the path again, it is midsummer. But scarcely do I begin following the path before my attention is attracted by a noise that is located near my feet. It sounds like someone picking on a tiny banjo string. I look carefully and observe one of the queerest looking elves sitting in my path and facing me, with its wings folded over its long, pointed abdomen, eyes bulging. I walk forward and then the thumping sound is heard again, the fairy having flown on and alighted a few feet in front of me, facing me again. My scurrying feet frighten small insects and as they are driven near my grotesque looking companion, it darts out and captures them one by one. My queer little friend is the robber-fly, and it is the rightful owner of the midsummer paths. As I walk on, this little fly follows me and seems to gaze at me. Apparently it is very shy and nervous. Remembering that there is scarcely a creature so wild that it will not readily respond to kindness, I squat down, slip slowly up to my curious little friend and reaching out my hand I rub it gently on the back as I have often caressed a kitten. The little scamp is not wild at all, and seems to enjoy being caressed. I finally bid it goodbye.

How the apples have grown, plums have ripened, clovers have been cut beside my midsummer path! Many of the grasshoppers are full grown, and most of the birds have left their nests. I hear less music from the songbirds. They were seeking lovers when I met them on my springtime path; now the honeymoon is over, and they have been facing serious problems of raising and feeding large families of children. The tenderness that characterized nature on my spring trip has almost disappeared. Things have grown strong since then, and there is a different fragrance in the atmosphere. The air is heavy with the scent of ripened grain, and the early goldenrods are just beginning to put on their yellow tam-o'-shanters. As I leave my path, I see another robber-fly near my feet, with the tip of her abdomen sticking something in the loose soil. I walk around lest I disturb her, for I can easily guess what she is doing.

Before I am scarcely aware of it, the air has grown quite chilly; the leaves have begun to turn to gold, and some are falling one by one. There are peculiar tints in the western skies at sunset. I must take to my path again. Paths were made for everything that has a humble spirit. Dogs, cattle, ants, beetles, girls, boys, men and women, alike, if humble, love the paths whose dénouements are as interesting as the bursting of the first flower bud of spring. It is very charming when the springtime or autumn path leads and winds through weeds where insects hum at work, or up rocky slopes where ant-armies are encamped.

But the autumn path—it is yours and it is mine! Oh those golden, yellow, brown, red bronzy greenish leaves that we see all about us! There is a hint of victory-gladness in them, and an intimation of sadness too that rustles in each tiny breeze. It is parting time with old friends. My path is just as charming as it was in winter, in spring and in summer, but many of my old friends are packing up to leave. My bird friends from the South are moving. The spiders have hung up silken sheets almost everywhere, and many of them are taking trips in their silken parachutes. The tree crickets are cheering up the fields and woodlands. In the evening their music swells the air in a manner unknown to other seasons. When the frost appears, I think I know why poets have sung about paths, and why historians and pilgrims like to immortalize them, and why the way of life is described as a simple path that leads to eternal bliss. Cheerfulness abounds wherever a path is found. Paths create faith, because no path can lead except to one destiny.

Give me a path, winter, spring, summer or autumn, with a child or a dog for a companion, and I will not lose faith in God or my fellow man.

Orchard Song

The boughs that swayed with ripened fruit
  Have one more apple left to fall—
The great globe of the golden moon
  Is hanging just above the wall.

The tree tops that had brushed the drift
  Of clouds and glinting wings in flight
Now toss no longer—they are filled
  With stars and silence through the night.

GLENN WARD DRESBACH.

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THE TWILIGHT OF THE PARTIES

By WILLIAM C. MURPHY, JR.

While the citzenry is busily deciding upon a man to control the machinery of federal government, Mr. Murphy turns his gaze upon the machinery itself. This, he feels, manifests several serious defects. His paper strives to justify this conclusion: "The plain fact is that an eighteenth-century establishment set up to exercise a few simple governmental functions for a sparse and predominantly agricultural people is entirely unfitted to carry its burden of multiplied and often incongruous activities in the machine age, industrialized civilization of today." What changes can take place?—The Editors.

IF THERE be a silver lining in the present cloud of depression and uncertainty, it would seem to be the demonstration that there are serious defects in the existing federal machine at Washington. Whether the nation will have the judgment and courage to remedy those defects, time will reveal, but the proof of their existence has been unmistakable.

The spectacle of an oversized and parochially-minded Congress striving to deal with vital national problems has been extremely disturbing. Editorial columns have been filled with denunciations of the "wild men on Capitol Hill," the President has warned that the interests of a "locust swarm of lobbyists" have been given precedence over the country's welfare, the Majority Leader of the House of Representatives has admonished the membership of that body that they were breeding Communism, a prominent senator has suggested that the United States needs a Mussolini. Superficially, there has been ample justification for this chorus of criticism, but it has been directed at symptoms rather than the fundamental causes of the government's illness.

The plain fact is that an eighteenth-century federal establishment set up to exercise a few simple governmental functions for a sparse and predominantly agricultural people, is entirely unfitted to carry its burden of multiplied and often incongruous activities in the machine age, industrialized civilization of today.

With all due respect to the august framers of the federal Constitution, it must be remembered that they did not create the one factor which has enabled the central government to function with some approach to a national vision: namely, the nation-wide political party. Indeed, some parts of the Constitution, as, for example, the provision for the electoral college, seem to indicate a desire to nullify the possible influence of parties.

As has been stated so often that its meaning is frequently overlooked, the Senate was conceived originally as the national balance wheel, the stabilizing influence to check possible excesses of an untrammelled democracy in the House. That function of the Senate, after a prolonged obsolescence, passed out of the picture entirely when direct election of senators was substituted for selection by state legislatures. Having more constituents to please, and more who might be offended, than members of the House, senators soon became political weather-vanes rather than ambassadors of sovereign states as they like to picture themselves. The Senate rather than the House has been the lair of the consummate demagogue during the past few decades.

Meanwhile, for the past half-century and up to the present Congress, the House has been the conservative branch and for one potent reason alone—the existence of national party organizations able to reward and discipline members. With only brief interruptions more spectacular than real, such as the insurgent uprising against the late Speaker Cannon during the Taft administration, the House has been continuously under the effective control of the leaders of one or the other of the two great parties. Very plausible arguments may be made that such control is unhealthy, that it constitutes a perversion of the ordained function of the House. But the fact remains that under centralized control the House was able to carry on its business in an orderly manner and with consideration for national rather than sectional or purely local interests. The further fact stands out, all too vividly outlined by recent events, that as soon as effective party control is removed, the House turns into a disorganized mob.

Something happened in the House during the hectic spring of 1932 which never happened there before but which, having happened, is likely to be repeated all too often in the future. That was the simultaneous and absolute defeat of the leaders of both parties on two notable measures, the tax bill and the economy bill. There have been many instances in which discipline in a then majority party broke down and a dissenting faction joined with the minority to defeat a majority program. But this was something entirely different: both parties at one and the same time lost all power of cohesive action. That was why the House ceased to be a national legislative body and turned into a seething medley of local groups contending for local advantages and, above all, striving to save the official hides of individual members.

It has been popular—and probably good politics—in some quarters to blame the House debacle upon the Democratic leaders, Speaker Garner, Floor Leader Rainey, Acting Chairman Crisp of the Ways and Means Committee. Undoubtedly they were to blame in part. They misjudged the temper of the House and did not even attempt to crack the party whip until it was obviously too late. But it is doubtful if anything they could have done would have changed the ultimate result, except in the matter of preserving their own

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prestige. It must be remembered that the Democratic majority in the House is a very slender one, varying from four to five votes during the period of the major explosions. For the past decade or more the Republicans have operated with majorities ranging from fifty to more than one hundred and in much less trying times. To be sure, the Democrats deserted their leadership wholesale during the present Congress, but so did the Republicans whose own leaders were working sincerely and arduously in coöperation with Garner and the other Democratic chiefs. Had the Republicans been in control with five or six times the majority held by the Democrats, the results would have been exactly the same, as is demonstrated by an analysis of the roll call votes.

There has been some disposition to blame the plethora of new members for the House lapse into chaos. More than fifty representatives are now serving their first terms and, as one of their veteran colleagues has remarked, "some of them have not learned yet that it is necessary to protect members from their own votes." By that, the veteran meant that when an important bill is brought in under an iron-clad "gag rule" and jammed through without opportunity for debate or amendment, a member can salve his conscience and his constituents with the theory that it is a party measure and he must go along with his party. Such has been the procedure in passing tax, tariff and other major bills for many years until the present Congress. However, when a complicated and voluminous measure is thrown open to free debate and amendment, every member finds he has some constituents who want something changed, and when 435 members strive to please their constituents, it is not long before the bill is whittled into nothingness. Probably the unusually numerous freshman class in the present Congress had something to do with the parliamentary tragedy, but the revolt was led by members of long service.

Whatever may have been the causes of the debacle, the important fact is that in the debacle the House was revealed in its true character before an astounded nation.

The outstanding revelation was that democratic parliamentary government is an experiment of extreme danger in a country with such variegated and conflicting interests as the United States, and that once the arbitrary restraint of party control is removed, there is no factor making for orderly and cohesive government by Congress. Nor, save for the purpose of electing a President every four years, is there any basic unity in either of the major parties. Consider, for example, the contrast between a New York or New England Democrat and his party confrère from Alabama or Mississippi. On the other side of the political fence, what unified purpose can be looked for in a party which nominated Calvin Coolidge and Smith Wildman Brookhart as candidates in the same election? Nor is there even the saving factor of sharply defined sectional interests, save for the misplaced racial issue which dominates the South. Every political principle which ever exerted telling influence has its origin in economic factors; and economic issues have ceased to be either partizan or sectional in the United States. They are, for the most part, purely local, with the cities of almost every state arrayed against their adjacent hinterlands and vice versa. The result is that each member of the House and Senate is a special pleader for his own constituency and without any compelling urge to give consideration to the national interest.

Party control of Congress is the only thing which has made Congress in any degree responsive to the will of the people as a whole. There have been times when that responsiveness was unsatisfactory, if not entirely lacking, for considerable periods. However, with the responsibility for congressional action definitely shouldered upon one party, it was always possible to turn that party out at the next election and thus give the opposition a mandate to follow a different course.

But consider the plight of the voters if there is no party control. John Smith, Representative from Podunk, concerns himself principally with obtaining funds for the new Podunk post-office. If he is successful, he is likely to be reëlected, regardless of his nominal political affiliations for, if there is no party responsibility for the course of government, there is no particular reason why a voter should prefer one party to the other. In former years, when Representative Smith wanted his post-office appropriation he took the matter up with his party leaders and, if he had a good record for party regularity, the appropriation was forthcoming. Thus Smith was identified with his party, he voted with a united party on major national issues, he received help from his party in his campaigns, and if his party's conduct of affairs became unpopular he went down to defeat with his party. Doubtless the system was unfair to Smith on occasion, but it gave the voters a chance to say how they wanted their central government conducted.

In the condition which has prevailed during the present Congress—which remains in office until March 4, 1933—the voter has no assurance that in voting for a Republican or a Democrat he is supporting a specific national policy. Both parties are hopelessly split. Hence the voter is inclined to disregard questions of national importance and vote for or against Congressman Smith on the basis of the latter's success or failure in obtaining the new post-office. Hence Congressman Smith is inclined to continue seeking favors through legislative horsetrading, in which votes for a tariff bill are exchanged for special protection to local industries, and the fate of an important treaty may hinge upon the confirmation or rejection of a second-class postmaster. So long as the horsetrading system prevails, there is little to be gained by unseating Congressman Smith and electing Congressman Jones, for the latter would be compelled to follow the same procedure.

Perhaps this is an unappetizing and sordid portrayal of the national legislative situation, but those unattractive characteristics do not impair its veracity.

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The dictatorships which have been erected upon the wreck of parliamentary government in several European countries since the war, point toward one possible way out of the present blind alley in which the American federal system finds itself. That solution, however, is one that is not likely to be accepted by the American people unless precipitated by some unforseen emergency of foreign war or domestic insurrection.

A more probable solution might be reached through an augmented delegation of legislative powers by Congress to executive agencies of the government. Despite the vociferous howls from Capitol Hill which always greet such suggestions, several major steps have been taken in that direction already. Probably the most important of such grants of power is one which has been so thoroughly consolidated by practice that its real nature is hardly appreciated: namely, the authority exercised by the Interstate Commerce Commission. Every activity of that commission is based upon a delegation of legislative power: the power given to Congress—not to the executive—to regulate interstate commerce. Delegation of the far-reaching authority now exercised by the commission was, of course, predicated upon the inability of Congress to deal directly with a complicated economic question requiring prompt and impartial decisions. So thoroughly has the country accepted the existence and work of the Interstate Commerce Commission, that probably few of the present generation ever stop to recall that Congress could, at any time, set aside or reverse any action of the commission.

A step in the same direction was taken by the creation of the United States Shipping Board, the real functions of which have been largely overshadowed in the public mind by the perennial squabble over the operating difficulties of the subsidiary Fleet Corporation.

Even the much-maligned Tariff Commission, with the concomitant presidential power to raise or lower import duties within specified limits, represents an important move toward divesting Congress of the exercise of powers which it has shown itself incapable of exercising efficiently. In the case of the Tariff Commission, the experiment has been handicapped by a disposition in both major parties to make this agency a partizan football, but that has no bearing upon the underlying principle.

The wrecked Economy Bill of 1932 offered another important evidence of the increasing trend toward delegation of legislative authority. That was illustrated by the willingness of the House to give the President power to reorganize executive bureaus subject to a qualified veto by Congress within a specified period. This grant had so many strings attached that its efficacy in the present emergency was rendered doubtful, but intrinsically it was tremendously significant. It was another step toward the principle of legislation by inaction; that is, of permitting executive officials to take action essentially legislative in nature which action becomes law unless disapproved by Congress. From the standpoints of speed and efficiency, the advantages of such a system over the present arrangement, whereby legislation is effected only through the positive action of a cumbersome and dilatory legislative branch, must be apparent without argument.

Perhaps, after several more steps have been taken in the direction of a more efficient system of government, there will no longer be an excuse for scenes such as the one enacted just outside the Senate Finance Committee room during consideration of the new tax bill. For days the committee had been rewriting the bill, inserting new items at one session and striking them out at the next. After one particularly boisterous session, Senator Reed of Pennsylvania left the committee room with disgust stamped unmistakably on his features. Jerking a thumb over his shoulder toward his colleagues, Reed remarked to the waiting newspaper correspondents: "Just a bunch of children playing with dynamite!"

THE AMERICAN AND EUROPE

By GOUVERNEUR PAULDING

THE WORLD WAR disagreeably proved that America shared in the failure of European competitive materialism, but America denied the proof. Wilson died. Under the administration of the three succeeding Presidents we plunged blindly into a concentrated failure of our own. We had thought ourselves something different from Europe, something apart. Our prosperity, we said, could exist by itself. No radical theory, no Catholic theory, could have a hearing. Liberals were futile, radicals fought materialism with materialism, yet the Communists, alone, presented a conception of the world as a whole. The Catholics were silent: they are silent still. These notes are for Catholics to meditate, for some Catholic to develop. They present, in some of its aspects, a case for the unity of America and Europe, for the rôle of the American in regard to Europe.

What is the intellectual position of the Catholic layman? He is the man who explores a problem, argues a case, develops it to a point where it attains moral importance and then submits it to the judgment of the Church. He is the man who analyzes matter to the point where for completion, for existence, it calls for the spiritual. The Catholic layman is he who attacks injustice, who attacks unreason and complacency, who attacks comfort and repose, indifference and sloth, to the point where these things are made to suffer, to attempt an impossible justification, and, again, to realize the existence of the spiritual. He should be, of all men, the most dissatisfied with a world that denies

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his God and denies its own unity. He should in his intransigent determination supersede the Jew whose heroic spirituality, to a great extent never lost, prefigured the Church, and whose modern presence in all countries and comprehension of them presents a parallel to the rôle of the modern American.

There is a practical reason why Americans must reconsider their attitude toward Europe. There has been a war, and some people are not entirely convinced that there may never be another. Now democracy has made war, very indirectly the declaring of it, directly the waging of it, and directly the effects of it, the concern of the men and women of every nation. This fact can be dated back to September 20, 1792. When the then Allied forces under the Duke of Brunswick met with unexpected resistance at Valmy, they, the professional armies, encountered for the first time a newly created democratic instrument, the national volunteer army. It later became the national conscript army, but from that day the modern army existed. At Valmy the army became the expression of the nation.

The technical military effects of the new national army, though they govern Napoleonic and modern warfare, do not concern us; the social effects do. Previous to the French Revolution the army was an instrument absolutely obedient to and controlled by the government. It was paid to fight without necessarily knowing why. Wars had no fourteen points. Indeed allies or enemies could be changed over night, foreign troops could be employed, and still the army, because it did not fight on national emotion, carried on. For this same reason wars could be stopped as suddenly and with as little explanation as they were started. But when the army became the nation, they fought only on a national issue, which meant unfortunately that they had to fight whenever a nation thought there was a national issue. It also meant that since no government can exist unless it has an army ready to fight (a public opinion ready to fight) any war it may declare, then every government has to keep public opinion prepared for war. In democracy, and in this case all modern nations without exception are democratic, the overwhelming machinery of modern war must be popular, must be emotional, before it can be set in motion. This popular emotion is rarely spontaneous: it is more often created by intelligent but dishonest minorities. It could never exist save where the ground has been prepared by a general state of nationalistic prejudice and ignorance. In order to get the money for armaments, in times of peace, governments are forced, through the press and other agencies, to encourage this general state of prejudice and are forced to keep always before the eyes of the people a set of alternate wars. They dare not discourage potential hatred because they need that hatred for their defensive and offensive efficiency.

How many Catholics even imagine that such a confession as the following could be made? "Forgive me, Father, for I have sinned. I never miss an opportunity to say something nasty about the English. I have the most complete contempt for all South Americans and particularly for the Mexicans. I mistrust any Americans who seem to like them, people like Waldo Frank, I mean. I suppose this falls under the heading of sins against charity."

The European speaks of Americans as a people without background, without memory, without tradition. But each individual is limited to the same short glance backwards. The American and the European regret the past or despise it to the same degree and as strongly the one as the other. For the European cannot throw into the balance an extra thousand years or so of history. That history belongs equally to the American. We all go back to the Greek and Roman sources and, lest we forget it, to the transcendent consciousness of the Jew. Secondarily, we all go back to those sixteen centuries when the development of our habits of mind and our knowledge took place in Europe. We all start from a common point and if we, the American or the European, wish to attain our full spiritual development it will be by the same means. The sources are open to both of us but are developed in neither save by an equal effort of assimilation. We each have only the influence, memory and tradition of our family; the first auditive and visual memories, elementary and universal in value. From that point upwards all is an effort. The American's memory and the European's turn back to the first smell of smoke from the morning fire, the first sensation of spring after the first winter, the first story told to him by his mother.

The American abroad, wherever he travels, cannot pass a day without hearing what he is and what his country represents. What he is told is seldom flattering. That is of no importance. But what is thought of him is seldom accurate and therefore tends to hinder a united civilization by building up one more wall of prejudice and ignorance. America must express itself to Europe in terms that show a common fundamental unity in origin and fact. It is a favorable time to do so now when Europe's interest in America has reached an intensity only shown on four historical occasions. One: when the Europeans discovered America and thought then, as they still do, that it was something else. Two: when they lost political and economic control of it. Three: when America intervened in the last war. Four: when by a combination of duty and necessity America became an essential factor in the settling of the war's havoc and, denying the duty, attempted to avoid the necessity of being such a factor.

This interest in the American, which differentiates him from the rest of the Western civilized peoples and personifies his nation as an alien and separate unit, has not always existed. The American abroad, or the American writer read abroad, did not always have to meet it. One may say that three very different periods made his person or his books received in different ways.

In the first place there was a time when an American of Dutch, English or French stock would be asked by the people he met in the country of his family's origin:

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"How long have you been out there across the sea? What should we send over there to sell? How do the seasons act compared to ours?" The American's answers were assumed to be satisfactory because it was assumed also that his standards of judgment were identical with those of the inquirer. This first period was that, of course, of colonial times, but it continued for fifty years or more after the political break. The idea of the American as racially and nationally a foreigner and the American conception of the European as a foreigner had not yet crystallized.

In a second period the break had taken place, and on each side could either be admired or regretted. In Europe, America dropped entirely out of the picture. In America, because of the intense interest in material progress and national unity, railways and the Civil War, the break with Europe was insisted on and admired. Europe to us represented an alien discipline and a narrow social and political system from which we had broken free. A reaction soon set in. Henry Adams discovered for America, in his book on Chartres, the middle ages. There was a new interest in Europe but an even more acute, because intellectual, awareness of the widening chasm. Henry James and Whistler despaired and went to England.

With rapid modern communications the habit of foreign travel increased, the modern tourist came to exist and with him came the production of a flood of superficial impressions, together with a very remarkable quantity of extremely able and intelligent American analysis of European countries. We are now infinitely more aware of Europe, more accurately informed, than Europe is of us. But the modern tourist remains untouched by any consciousness of unity. He knows, or could know, from the work of his compatriots a great deal about Europe. His mind, however, remains like the camera he carries: he photographs from the outside and goes home with the film. He is the lonely American, often pitiable in his efforts to escape from that loneliness: he admits his alien nature. It is the price he pays for not opposing the brutal anti-alien manifestations with which America in hysterical moments oppresses the recent immigrant. This American of the third period alternates between the weak, the suppliant, the humiliated and the defiant. "Europe is so old, such traditions, such culture, such refinement," he says; or: "Europe is too old, has too many traditions, and they have brought her where she is." When will the new American realize that it is his own thought which daily re-creates Europe to precisely the same degree that it creates America?

The break between America and Europe coincides with a break in European sequence itself. Our nationalism coincides with the new post-revolutionary European nationalisms. The sense of isolation and separateness between the American and European did not at first exist. But neither did any such particularism exist in Europe between the countries that compose it. In both cases there is a break with the past: in both cases, a spiritual cause. The only remedy is a spiritual one: consciousness of unity. Among Casanova's many useful observations on the society of his times was his first rule for the behavior of a gentleman: "Never be ill-bred enough to ask a stranger his nationality." The eighteenth century unconsciously retained this survival of a united Christendom.

Say to Europe: "We know you to be the Western experience of our fathers since the fall of the Roman Empire. We know that the Catholic Church preserved all that was preserved of classical civilization and held it while you prepared the middle ages. We know that your history is dominated by the struggle between the Faith and unbelief, and we know that politics and nations are but fragments of this greater picture. What you think of us is easily told. You think we are the Man in the Moon and his children living where the map is marked United States—a race from the moon, from nowhere, a new creation. And we say that this conception of America as a young race is so false that it must totally obscure your vision. You forget that the only young race that ever existed stumbled, once upon a time, blind with pain and uncertainty from the Garden of Eden, and rapidly grew old. You forget that in America there have never been more than three races: the very ancient Indian race of the aborigines blessed with neither tariff nor quota; the very ancient European race that exterminated it; and the very ancient race brought from Africa into slavery and destined surely after its tribulations to rise to heights it has never known. Unless you think that from the intermarriage of European elements one can arrive at a new race, there can be no new race in America. And if you think that such factors can make a new race, then consider the whirlpool of races that have combined to form the modern Frenchman, the modern Italian, the modern Englishman. The generation of our most recent immigrants is also, barring infants, the oldest European generation to date. We are, then, an old race, your race, and if we reproduce the confusion and uncertain aim of Europe, that is our inheritance from you. And if we make steel, seek for oil and coal, run sweatshops, that also is the consequence of something European called the industrial revolution. For we were a nation of farmers, traders, explorers, sailors. We had the fastest sailing vessels the world has seen. The factory came to us from Manchester. If now we emphasize our undeniably European origin, certainly it is not to flatter ourselves or you: it is to make you accept us as fundamentally identical with yourself. This is unfortunate you will agree, since, apart from our opinion of each other, it would be pleasing to discover a glaring exception to a uniform human misery. But no one has ever found it. Together we face a world from which all the old values have gone. Our economic distress is a blackboard on which your doom is written. Your Léon Bloy, your Maritain, speak a language we must hear. You must go to Rome, and America must answer Rome."

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LONDON: 1932

By E. FRANCIS RIGGS

I HAVE been home from London long enough to have had a chance to think it all over and contrast it with what is going on here.

During over two months in London I met many men, and all of them—hall porters, headwaiters, city men, journalists, literary men, industrialists, army officers, sportsmen, politicians, peers of the realm—all, without exception, took it for granted that, as Germany would never pay England, she could not pay the United States. Nearly all were very polite about it, some serious, most of them merry. According to the British yellow press it is not "can't pay" but "won't pay!" There is much repetition of reasons why the United States cannot object to "repudiation"—since many of the states "repudiated" their debts, Congress and indeed the people "repudiated" their President's signature and acts, America "repudiated" her allies, or associates, by "repudiating" the League of Nations, and so on *ad nauseam*. The psychology, at least of the intelligentsia, is that of wartime, transferred to the economic plane.

The "Buy British" campaign is taken very seriously. I was lunching at one of the service clubs, when one of our party asked for gorgonzola. The headwaiter hurried up and whispered that they served no foreign cheese! (As Port is considered naturalized, there was no difficulty raised on that score.) The smart restaurants are even forced by public opinion (or volunteer out of patriotism) to star all foreign dishes on their menus. For instance, when you eat caviar or *endives belges* you cannot plead that you have not been warned.

Many people conscientiously torture themselves trying to smoke Empire tobacco. There is even an Empire liqueur from South Africa, the taste for which, judging by one sample, must be difficult acquiring! Meat in the butcher stalls, fruit and vegetables are nearly all marked "Empire produce." The cheaper cuts of meat are not marked.

Great Britain being a land run for men by men, in spite of the presence of many ravishing beauties, the first duties were placed on cosmetics. Lipsticks skyrocketed from two and six to four shillings and are rapidly climbing. The ladies grin a grim wartime smile and do without their French lipsticks (or pay the difference).

This exclusion and suspicion of foreign goods is a strange rôle for Britons. How it would have puzzled the men who made the eighteenth-century empire and who looked upon all the world's goods at London docks as the surest indication of wealth!

The British steamship lines are doing a big business in cheap tours to British colonies, even the distant ones. Hundreds who usually go to the Riviera went to South America or Ceylon last winter.

Of course all this effort has brought a revival of nationalism, a change in vision quite different from the old outlook. A very decided anti-French reaction is clearly to be felt. After-dinner entertainment, so characteristic of London fashionable life, received a heavy blow last winter when it was rumored that the Prince had set his face against much dining out in public, for in London what the Prince of Wales does not patronize soon withers and dies.

The streets are quite free of beggars. There are no apple sellers and no old soldiers with their medals and white, hungry faces, who used to be seen on London streets selling matches. Whether it is the dole or the pickup in employment resulting from the new conditions, I cannot tell, but certainly the streets are clearer of beggars, pedlers and hungry men than I ever remember.

Sartorial custom for the men shows absolutely no signs of ever relapsing into Edwardian splendor. "Toppers" are confined to bank messengers and others in the city while on official business. The great majority of the denizens of an uptown club are garbed in sack suits all week. Some of the more conservative still wear black sack coats during the week, more wear black ties. From Saturday to Monday, however, the rougher the costume, the smarter it is. Plus-fours and club or regimental ties are worn by all, the lucky ones because they are going to or coming from the country, the others because they want to appear to be going or coming.

Noel Coward's "Cavalcade" has been much discussed. It is the story of an English household from Boer War times to the present. Black silent crowds watch outside the palace gardens during Queen Victoria's last illness, her funeral is heard, but unseen, through a window, "Tipperary" and other war songs are sung by music-hall artists with ever-increasing frenzy to mark the years of war, while helmeted Tommies march upstage in a never-ending column, there are goodbyes and wounded at the leave train—and the play ends in the final frenzy of a jazz-mad world. This last note is bitter satire.

It is already a hackneyed remark but it is increasingly true that London is becoming more and more Americanized daily, at least exteriorly and architecturally. The new hotels, department stores, movie palaces, are all on the American model. In this connection I narrowly escaped making what is known in Britain as a ghastly exhibition of myself. Walking down Regent Street I was astounded to see what were apparently two armed constables on the roof of a large building. Apparently a man-hunt was in progress! What a scandal in London! I walked rapidly toward the nearest Bobbie. Something in his calm caused me to look again before I asked what violence was being done. Now, all was clear. The building was a large new movie, the feature was a penitentiary film in the best American manner, and the men on the roof were supers! Shades of Sir Robert Peel!

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MORE THAN ONE DIVORCE

By W. J. BLYTON

IT IS easy for the millions of us who skim life with the aid of our daily papers to be engrossed too much in surface symptoms, when all the time the trouble is beneath. To examine the springs of the malady is more fascinating than to fret helplessly at results, and far more useful. The vice of divorce, the obvious ruptures of marital relations reflected in newspapers and courts, is a mere local symptom of something far more remarkable. Man's genius for going wrong begins before that: it begins in the recesses of his mind. There dangerous kinds of divorce are going on, to the untold loss of religion, politics, individual life and happiness. It is this syncopation in many minds' functioning that leads to monstrous evils in laws and codes, morals and manners.

Look at a few concrete examples, easily recognizable around us at this moment of crisis in the world's history.

One ought to premise that the tragedy begins with the semi-educated, half-baked intellectualism, which is just about what most civilized peoples have arrived at. A risky stage of evolution! "A little learning is a dangerous thing"; and people invent phrases and labels, "masked words, skulking words," Ruskin called them, that become boss-words which throw clear thought off the rails. Thus the pigeon-hole mind is born; and the mischief starts. The average compartmentalized mind forgets that things which God has put together, man only sunders at his peril. It raises partitions where no hard and fast partitions were meant to be.

For example, most of us were born with a too naive and violent individual differentiation between "me" and "you." Such a metaphysical distinction exists, of course. But it is only a very small part of the spiritual story. Now unregenerate, egoistic man erects it into a moral barrier, till he instinctively sees others only as possible rivals, critics, obstructions or foes. One of the last things men learn on this earth, and some never learn it at all, is that "we are members one of another," that "no man lives to himself" and that "if one member suffereth, all the rest suffer with it." It takes some people all their lifetime of mistakes to see that in doing another a good turn, they are not doing themselves a bad one. Everyone has to learn anew that meekness can actually "pay," that concession is the secret of happy social (or private) living, that forgiveness is not weakness but the supreme renovator, and that sacrifice is not morbidity but vitality.

Still, the individual, morally a blockhead though he often is, is leagues in advance of clans, tribes and nations. It is an often-noted fact that when men get together and confer or act officially, the optimum of kindness, wisdom and fairness is less than the minimum of many an individual's. National and similar assemblies seem destined to register decisions to which the shrewd private person would hesitate to put his signature. The pack-spirit, nowadays nationalism, does and countenances things which make the judicious unit grieve. Parliaments, Senates, Congresses, Reichstags and the rest stammer and grope their way deviously to right decisions far slower than a wise man would, and with more trial and error. This is partly due to faction and party, to tactics and fear of the other side; but it is often due to national egoism, the lack of a world-conscience.

You and I, for instance, as individuals—aye, even as selfishly enlightened business men—would forgive A. his debts to us, if we knew that by dunning him we should ruin him as a potential customer whom we have to live on. But can nations and majorities see that? They cannot. You and I, in our homes, do not collect, hoard and lock up all the gold in our home town, county and state, so that the other local shopkeepers have no currency or little with which to patronize us. But nations do that—and then wonder why the shop doorbell seldom rings, and why the gold in the back-parlor safe leaves us in a horrible slump!

It is a kink in the human mind, this divorce of the end from the means, of cause from effect. Is it original sin—or aboriginal stupidity? The average blunt, untrained intelligence—impervious for years to the cumulative battering of experience and suffering—does not perceive that we live on mutual service and exchange, or else perish; that money is round in order that it may roll; that the body politic, like our own bodies, must have free circulation or die.

Of course, America, Britain, France and the rest will learn this in time, because events will tap the lesson ultimately home with the mallet of revolution or hunger (by which the boniest head is permeable). But it seems a pity we can't do it spontaneously—we "men like gods" with the prescience, apparently just now, of stunted ants.

There is another divorce which has strewn history with incalculable harm: the divorce between religion and morality. Again, to the immeasurable loss of both. Divorced from the sanctions of religion, morality becomes a conceited stoicism, or "playing the game," or a calculating code. And by the breach religion would become a luxuriating in emotion or an outward observance. They rot apart; they sing together.

Next there is the familiar device of taking some one letter of the law, and isolating it from the whole living context of behavior, worship and devotion. Cigarettes, for instance. If only the world could be weaned from cigarettes (or some perfectly footling substitute in these crank minds), all would go well. Apparently Providence would release the earth from earthquakes, wars, blights and strikes. More often this astigmatism fastens on malt cordials or the juice of the grape—called by them "alcohol" (which it isn't) or "strong drink" (which it seldom is, now, in non-prohibition lands). The most intemperate things are said about temperance. I have heard zealots lash themselves into an indifference toward far weightier matters of the law, and even substitute tea and cold water for the pure milk of the Gospel. They mutilate even the Divine message for their whim. They lose all power of argument, concession or perspective. It is one of the severest liabilities on the evangel of the Church that such one-idea people arise from time to time offering a part for the whole, a fad for the Faith.

Granted that gambling, drink or anything else are sins—and they are—sins against God, against the family, against your own future security and your body: nevertheless, they spring from something deeper, man's sinful nature, and you do not convert that to God and the good life by putting police officers to harry and scare people; you only stop up a particular exit. Sin breaks out promptly somewhere else—often the very same sin!—and the last state of that man or population is as bad as the first; indeed worse, because you have added defiance and cunning, and forced them to invent new outlets and forms of offense.

Thus it is folly to divorce one bit of morals from the whole of morality, and still worse to separate morality from the supreme precepts of religion and the prime duty of remembering God. A man may have been "cured" of drink by force or psychological coercion; but is he a miser, an adulterer, is he still perhaps godless, a boor, a profiteering thief? Why wont men, even moral, well-meaning and supposedly educated men, see things in the round—as wholes, not fragmentarily?

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There is also the modern cult of marriage divorced from love-for-a-lifetime; and marriage without children. Again it is the old fallacy of seeing one thing and one aspect only. It is, with millions of fluent writers and talkers, as though their ideas marched in Indian file, serially, or as though there is only room in their world for one at a time. It is the cause, the deep-seated mental cause, of half the world's bitter peculiarities and evils.

The gratuitous, absurd and costly divorce of science from faith, too. What foaming cataracts of nonsense have been uttered in our time about the alleged contrary reports of these two! Yet if people would only think through, see things steadily and see them whole, they would see that truth is (necessarily) one and consistent with itself in all its ramifications, and one part will not ultimately contradict another. But the impatient, short-view partizan mind cannot wait to see the subtle connections, analogies and complements.

Once more, aren't many of the current calamities in industrial and commercial affairs owing to the disastrous trick we have of dividing economics from politics? Politicians know too little of business and exchange; business men overdo their despising not only of politicians but of government and policy. But neither can do without the other, and both need a world in which ethics and religion and law run freely. Similarly, we all know the fate that overtakes artist or poet who is aloof from the world of men; even if he does not starve, he becomes "precious," footling and feeble, and suffocates in his own Ivory Tower. On the other hand, the world which misesteems its interpreters and seers contracts fatty degeneration of the head, leanness in the soul, and becomes smugly Philistine. In this world, everything is meant to mingle freely with others—air, moisture, ideas, goods and money.

Needless to say, isolation and eclecticism are heresy. Heresy as a word, indeed, derives from "picking and choosing." Heresy sees the world by odd little flashes of lightning, not by the light of the steady sun. The finest aspiration anyone can have is Tennyson's—to see things "with a Catholic wholeness," like Saint Francis. It is no special fate that has pursued theology and the Church down the ages; it is the chronic human vice of freezing exclusively on to some single facet of things to the neglect of others quite as valuable. This quitting, separatist spirit was at work quite early: Saint John refers to those "who went out from among us," and Saint Peter alludes to those "who with itching ears gather to themselves teachers after the lusts of their own hearts." It is the dismal failure of men to keep the jewel of faith "one entire and perfect chrysolite," preferring to break it up and exaggerate the one segment they have taken out. Thus, very soon, there were the Docetists who could not see the true human nature of Our Lord for His Divine Nature. Then there were the half-idead Arians who stressed the human at the expense of the Divine. Next there were those who would have it that there were two persons in Christ. And so on. Determined, it seems, to exhaust every possible error. In like manner, about man's nature, all sorts of errors—rife with calamity, if the central, even-minded Church had not witnessed against them—raised their heads. Now man was totally and utterly depraved; now he was not depraved at all. One single-track mind said he was all spirit; another, that he was all matter. The truth that he is both, in a wonderful combination, could not be surgically inscribed in either of their heads. There was the famous controversy that revolved about free will: one party not allowing for its limitations, the other denying it altogether. Poor humanity, splitting hairs and forgetting to put them together again; riding a horse to death; shutting one eye; swearing by tar-water or some other nostrum as a cure-all; deaf as an adder to some supplementary truth. It is a marvel that it has got as far as it has. Sectarian, party, nationalist spirit, these are the shackles, and they are with us today.

Terms, labels and distinctions are most useful dialectically and logically, as a means to an end: to clear discussion and so on; but they may be the very devil when they become rigid and wooden, cutting up the unity of our world, of our ideas or of the seamless robe of the Church. Analysis alone kills; it is synthesis that gives life. The Catholic synthesis alone sees facts orbed and full. Its world-view is coherent, it is hospitable to all true points of view, so long as these admit their partial character and know their completion exists in the whole.

THE MUSICIAN

By G. C. HESELTINE

TARBES disappointed me at first. Perhaps it was because I had always associated it in some way with Nîmes—I first heard of it in the rhyme:

> "Heretics all whoever you be
> In Tarbes or Nîmes, or over the sea . . ."

but I forgot that poets have a licence to push in any place because it fits the line, and for no other reason. Again by association with Nîmes and Carcassonne, I had come to think of all three as similar survivals from the middle ages, and expected to find them all to some extent redolent of mediaeval atmosphere, adorned with old architecture and contemptuous of progress. At Tarbes I expected to find a jumble of comfortable old houses, churches and inns nestled together in the homely natural fashion detested by the progressive sanitary inspector and graminivorous hygienist. But Tarbes struck me (it may have been one of my bad days) as singularly characterless. Even its neighbors, Lourdes and Pau, tripper and tourist infested as they are, have their saving features.

But Tarbes has neither an ancient frontier fort like the eighth-century château at Lourdes, nor a figure such as "Nostre Henri" of Navarre to hang itself on like Pau. Even the cathedral is not memorable. Very ancient though it is, Tarbes looks like a French market town that might have grown up anwhere during the past century. I was certainly disappointed. There were no letters for me at the *poste restante,* so that made it worse.

I was just getting sufficiently fed up with Tarbes to resolve to leave it in an hour or so, when I found in the square a café with a balcony. Having taken my seat and ordered food and drink, Tarbes began to entertain me. To begin with, a couple of workmen on a scaffolding opposite started an argument, which in a few moments became so involved as to demand their whole attention. So they let fall the heavy plank they were lifting, and it slid with great unconcern, and a really excellent crash, through the large plate-glass window of a new store, probably a tentacle of one of the octopus sort from Paris, Felix Potin or 100,000 Chemises.

In another café in the square a group of five or six "smart" Frenchmen, of various sizes and ages, had collected with much handshaking and were deep in a rattling conversation. I had concluded they were journalists, probably because they each carried several newspapers and tried to scan them all at once. But the crashing plate-glass did not interest them at all. They did not even look to see what had happened. They were probably all ex-gunners from a battery of *soixante-quinzes,* eager to

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see what was tipped for the three-thirty. I was beginning to feel that Tarbes was more interesting than it looked.

So after lunch I set out to explore further. I found a quarter rather older than the rest, though still fairly commonplace. But it was quiet, and the streets pretty well deserted but for an odd infant or two playing in the doorways. Presently I saw a young fellow of twenty or so coming along, thick-set Béarn type but inclined to blond with a suggestion of the Basque, neither very poorly nor very well clothed. He was led by a child of eight or nine, for he had no eyes and looked as if he had been born blind. He stopped at the end of the street and took a bagpipe from under his arm, a much simpler affair than the Scotch, with a smallish bag and only one reed. He adjusted the instrument and began to play, slowly and softly at first, and then getting into full blast with a rare lilt as he walked slowly down the street.

At once the street became alive. Children poured out of the houses, heads popped out of the upper-story windows and men and women came to the doors. There was a shower of small coins into the road. The little guide gathered them up and put them into the piper's pocket. Children were sent running from the houses to give more to the youngster who busily collected the cash. There was a steady trickle of small change thrown from the houses on either side. But the piper walked slowly on, playing now a dance, now a marching air, now a dirge.

His dances had a Spanish lilt, but what they were did not matter. They sounded excellent and mighty well played. I fell to wondering vaguely what strange evil influence makes so many of my fellow countrymen prefer the dreamy and sticky swampstuff and jazz to this fine vigorous music that abounds in the hills and valleys of Europe. I wondered what sort of a reception the piper would get down a similar backstreet in, say, Detroit, or at the Metropolitan Opera House. He would probably be patronized affectedly at some highbrow hostess's crush, and might do fairly well if he were boosted skilfully by his agent and became the rage—for any fool could see that he could play. And in New York he would certainly be "quaint."

But I will swear he was better off in the back streets of Tarbes. For assuming every coin he got was the lowest in the currency, he must have done pretty well whilst I listened to him. And if he can make as much in ten minutes as I saw put into his pocket, he must be passing rich whenever he likes. Moreover, he is free to play what he likes, when he likes, and how he likes, and no artist can ask for more.

On a Portrait of Innocent X by Velasquez

(Palazzo Doria, Rome)

Here brushes, dipped in proud, Sevillian fire,
Project a Pontiff from the years of gold;
High, molded brow—keen eyes—kindly, yet bold
With business of the Church; no feeble friar,
This Keeper of the Keys—this pacifier
Of warring hordes, who now vested and stoled
In vividness, through color-tone controlled,
Has left as heritage himself entire.

The bells of Cordova exult again—
The giant lamps of the Lateran give tongue,
Hailing created beauty, old yet young
And new as almond blooms caressed by rain.
Not ever shall art's requiem be sung!
This Pope is Rome, and that rich glamor—Spain!

J. Corson Miller.

COMMUNICATIONS

WHY NOT A KINGDOM OF IRELAND?

Stone, England.

To the Editor: There has been strangely ignored what seems to me an interesting point in regard to the future of the Irish State, that problem attracting so much attention at the moment. With such questions as the right (or otherwise) of the Irish people to abolish the oath of allegiance to King George, or to withhold the payment of the land annuities, I am not here concerned; but assuming for the sake of argument that they are free to establish a completely independent state, it is surely a matter of no little importance that it should not be taken for granted by all (as it apparently is) that the goal of those who are working for such a state must necessarily be a republic.

Especially is this a matter that concerns Catholics, for if we take a long-sighted view of the matter, we can hardly do other than conclude that an Irish republic would in the end almost inevitably develop that anti-clerical tendency which has for centuries been such a prominent feature in many republics the whole world over. Needless to say, the Catholic Church does not officially support any particular form of government, and is ready to welcome any government that is lawfully established and does not run counter to the laws of God; but, none the less, experience and even a slight knowledge of history must convince us that parties of the Left almost invariably have at the best an undercurrent of hostility to the Church. This is not to say that a Liberal, Labor man, Democrat or moderate Socialist (call him what you will) cannot be a good Catholic individually; but the fact remains that whenever a country is found to be acting in a manner hostile to the Church that country is almost invariably found to have a government of the Left.

Now if this is true (and it is a simple fact of history), it is surely unfortunate that there should seem to be no future other than republicanism for so Catholic a country as Ireland. It is a point that would seem to be well worthy of consideration before it is too late. Suppose that Ireland breaks away from the British Commonwealth of Nations (to use the current phrase), why should it not be possible to set up a kingdom? By all means let it be a constitutional monarchy, if that is desired, but at all events a monarchy of any sort is much more likely to prove an effective bulwark to the ever-spreading flood of Socialism and Bolshevism than would any republic.

There are, of course, obvious and considerable difficulties in the way of any such scheme, but difficulties are inevitable in any scheme, and are made to be overcome. Perhaps one of the chief difficulties would be that of finding a suitable candidate for the throne, but in the last hundred years many a small European country has solved this problem for itself. There is no doubt that the glamor of royalty still makes a potent appeal to many and that it can rally more real devotion and enthusiasm, if properly handled, than can any republicanism. Here again history speaks with no uncertain voice: the enthusiasm of Scotland for their Stuart kings, and especially for "Bonnie Prince Charlie," or that of the Prussians for Frederick the Great, could not have been aroused by any government having merely a political and elected head; and in modern times we all know that the Bavarians still cherish the memory of the Wittelsbachs and have not given up the hope of seeing Prince Rupprecht ascend the throne of his fathers—any more than have the Hungarians forgotten the claims of Prince Otto of Hapsburg.

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Now if the right man could be found, and this does not seem inherently impossible, he would do more to hold Ireland together, to promote its true interests, and to draw its people together by focussing their common loyalty and devotion and pride on himself and on his family, than could any other form of government.

But it is not for any such political motives that this suggestion is here made. It is the thought of the danger that may be in store for the Church in that most Catholic land should a republic of the Left be formed, that impels me to put pen to paper. By some curious sequence of events it has happened that the fight for Irish independence has passed entirely into the hands of republicans, so that it has for long been taken for granted by everyone that a republic is the only conceivable alternative to remaining within the British Empire, and against this notion I wish emphatically to protest, for I see a very real danger in it to the faith of our descendants in Ireland. I do not for a moment say that Mr. de Valera and his ministers are in any form of league with anti-clerical forces, whether Masonic or Bolshevist, but I do say that in the very nature of things a government of the Left will in the long run be almost bound to fall foul of the Church. We do not want another era of persecution of Catholicism in Ireland, but unless action is taken before long that is what the Irish people are committing themselves to.

And on what country has the principle of monarchy a better historic claim than on Ireland? The ancient kings of Ireland are inextricably bound up with the glorious history of the country's golden age before ever the English invader set foot in the country. Let Tara again witness a royal coronation, let there once again be a successor to Malachi and to Brian Boru, and there will be many to cry exultantly: "Long Live the King of Ireland!" Let the Irish people think it over.

J. C. D. Whelan.

A LAYMAN'S PLAINT

Colonie, N. Y.

TO the Editor: Normally I am not statistically minded, but I am curious to know the estimated mortality among our lawful pastors when Commonweal's "Layman's Plaint" smote their ears and they realized that one man had listened to a sermon long enough to criticize it.

Stenography is my er-a profession and in the beginning I needed speed. Even your best friends won't help you, so I turned to Holy Church. I took sermons, and ceased the practice only when I feared I might forget and, as I would for a trained mind in an office, supply the missing word for that long, groping pause. Lucky Greeks if they always had a word for it! Once, being young and very dumb, I flitted into the sacristy to ask a question about the subject-matter just set down.

"You listened?" inquired the priest in an awed voice.

I have lived to learn why. There is nothing so admirable for releasing the mind to its own pursuits as a Sunday morning sermon, heard in the shadow of the pulpit; other times, other places, the spell is broken. Our lawful pastors, looking over a sea of blank faces, know that they fortress minds pleasantly engaged with new wardrobes, fall advertising campaigns or the great American novel, and impregnable alike to eternal verities and split infinitives. The one accessible seat of intelligence in a churchful, they now know, beyond the peradventure of a doubt, is formulating a letter to The Commonweal.

I feel very sorry for the Catholic intelligentsia, for their low-brow brethern catalogue culture with the Christmas collection—the pastor takes it up. They are alone on a peak in Darien. But I feel sorrier for a Catholic priest when the intelligentsia let him down. It is difficult to maintain a literary style on an empty stomach, and a Sunday morning congregation is not guaranteed to inspire, *mea maxima culpa*. And then, there is no accountin' for taste. I know of a place where the pastor is an accomplished orator and the second-in-command, easy on the ears, but the vote of the parish would certainly go to their newly ordained. An analytical mind would say it is because as he stands above them in his fair, strong, earnest, white youth, he is a more satisfying sermon than his talented superiors could ever preach. If trained minds have their analyses, the masses have their intuitions and get there just the same. And I know of another place where the same peroration has been in vogue for twenty years. Any child can quote it. It is a signal for the organist to switch on his power, the ushers to reach for the collection baskets, and the congregation to let loose that barrage of coughs which follows the tersest public utterance, civil or ecclesiastic. Would Layman, plaintiff, suppress that handy little peroration? Congress should adopt it.

Sermons are no worse than after-dinner speeches, political key-notes, commencement addresses, and the general run of radio discourses, and they are really much better than the letters emanating hourly from trained minds. In fact, if I may speak with engaging frankness, they are better than the letters written by pinch-hitting stenographers while the trained minds are going around in fifty-four.

Loretta Reilly.

Brooklyn, N. Y.

TO the Editor: Somewhere in a corner of the cellar of my ancestral home, in an upper New York State city, there lies a battered old trunk containing trophies and mementoes of scholastic and other endeavors which I garnered in the course of an inconspicuous boyhood. Among such relics, encased neatly in a plush-lined box, is a gold medal on which is engraved my name and the announcement to an inquiring world that in A. D. 1901 I led the Fifth Grade of St. Patrick's School in Christian Doctrine.

It was no mean feat to achieve that honor, for the Sisters were doing a good job with the crop of Irish adolescence entrusted to them, but little did I appreciate that shiny guerdon of intellectual prowess at the time. The fact that its recipient had to scrub up and dress up—including detestable shoes and stockings—for proper appearance before the bishop clouded whatever glory and pride should have been mine on the occasion of its presentation.

Today, however, I am sending home for that medal. I intend to give it a place of honor on my bookshelf and cherish it for the worth I have disregarded so long. The reason for this change in attitude is "Pastor's" letter in your current issue in answer to my "Layman's Plaint" against continual catechetical and low-geared homiletic fare in the average Catholic parish pulpit. Incidentally, I did not attack simple sermons. Let us have such preachments every Sunday, if simplicity be not confused with vagueness and boredom.

Pastor promises me the shock of my life if I question the "average college or convent graduate, or the average lawyer or doctor, all Catholics," on the Immaculate Conception, Mass, Real Presence or marriage laws. Catholic physicians and lawyers, as a class, have "a very dim idea of the fundamental truths of the Church," and I will find that the ones who need "plain instruction in simple words are those who claim to be intellectuals."

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That was more than a shock to me. In fact, I was nearly bowled over, and sincerely hope Pastor was greatly exaggerating. Surely it is a sorry indictment of our Catholic higher education, if it were true. If such be the conditions in the scholastic green wood, what may we expect from the dry? But I was making no particular plea for "intellectuals," whoever they may be. I was referring particularly to literate, adult Catholics who boast of no higher learning than goes with a Regents' certificate. This class is the backbone of our church population and is appreciative of simple clear homilies, resigned to frequent repetition of and insistence on the fundamentals and ever hoping, withal, that the preacher will key his sermon just a bit above the one he delivers at the children's Mass. They do not ask nor expect eloquence, merely a "break" now and then—a strange interlude in which listening to the sermon will not be a work of supererogation.

As for the "intellectuals," I think they can be brought up to par by special catechetical classes, such as our Fifth Grade received, if need be, thus giving more leeway for those who boast of mere literacy and a primary school education.

But if that is impracticable, I am inclined to follow the method of Kathleen Morely Rogers, who adds to the least common denominator that the pulpit offers, "further sums from her literate, adult background." Failing at that, I shall resume my unregenerate practice of sitting back at sermon time, closing my eyes as though better to concentrate and, pious fraud that I am, quietly lapsing into sleep until the shuffling of feet at the Credo awakens me.

S. J. FITZGERALD.

STRONGBOY AT GENEVA

Baltimore, Md.

TO the Editor: In a recent issue of THE COMMONWEAL, Roger Shaw as the "Strongboy at Geneva" suggests many interesting and eminently sensible changes to our present-day European map. May I, in the spirit of the game, venture to add a few points?

Galician Ukrainians, as Mr. Shaw implies, naturally would desire freedom from Poland and union with their brethern of Soviet Ukrainia. However, the generality of Ukrainian leaders, as evidenced by their Declaration of Independence in 1917 under Professor Hrushevsky, earnestly desire complete independence. As Little Russians, they feel the need of total separation from the Great Russians of the Soviet Republic and Poland.

Another nationality, entirely forgotten when the Strongboy was laboring, is the White Russians—a people racially close to the Ukrainians, but not identical. Living north of the Ukrainian stock, and east of the Lithuanians, they aim for independence from Poland and Russia and political federation with the Ukraine and Lithuania. They have good reason, as their history shows, to expect friendship from these two peoples. Indeed, a strong party is working in the two territories today, cementing cultural relations as a prelude to possible political union. Of course, an absolute requisite for this latter move is the surrender of Vilnius, the ancient Lithuanian capitol, by Poland to Lithuania, as Mr. Shaw agrees.

Speaking of a Baltic Confederation, similar to that of the Swiss, Mr. Shaw might be gratified to learn of a tremendous plan some dreamers are even now weaving. Latvia, sister nation to Lithuania, would consent to such a federation almost immediately, if it were not that by doing so she might incur Poland's disfavor. If the anomalous state of war now existing between Poland and Lithuania would be removed in the only possible way, Latvia might not hesitate any longer. Esthonia would likely follow suit, as the Strongboy suggests. In the end, it is possible that all of Ukrainia, White Russia, Lithuania, Latvia and Esthonia might combine into a political federation—forming quite a solid phalanx in between the Soviets and Western Europe.

But in that case, why carve off the Memel Territory from Lithuania? True, Germany possessed it for three centuries previous to the World War, but it was originally Lithuanian country. As late as 1895 a petition demanding for the Lithuanian language equal privileges with the German was signed in East Prussia by 27,000 citizens, and the petition was granted! A glance by a philologist at the surnames of the Memel assemblymen would indicate unmistakably a majority of Lithuanian stock, even among those in opposition to the government.

One last point. The battle of Tannenberg in 1410 was fought under the leadership of the Lithuanian Grand Duke, Vytautas the Great. The presence at the battle of Jogaila, King of Poland, but cousin of Vytautas and a Lithuanian also, is the only basis upon which Poland can claim to have defeated the Teutonic Knights in that battle. The victory was a Lithuanian one.

VALENTINE MATELIS.

AN APPEAL FROM ASSISI

Assisi, Italy.

TO the Editor: Will you think me an utterly importunate beggar if I come hat in hand begging a little help (if you know anyone who would give help) to feed the starving children of Assisi?

As you probably know, at all times there are underfed children here—but this year the conditions are just awful. No work, no money! And it is pitiful to see the starved faces of the children. Mr. Joergensen and a few people have formed a committee who give a plateful of soup twice a week to about one hundred hungry women and children. They can do no more for lack of money. The Bishop is helpless also for lack of money.

So we in the Capuchin College have made up our minds that we must do something to help: by feeding some of those whom the committee cannot feed. In ordinary times I could safely look for help in England, but everywhere there is distress, and I can only hope to get a very little help from any one source. Father Desiderius, the Dutch Father, is writing to beg a little from Holland. I have put an appeal in our English *Franciscan Annals*. But as I say, we can only hope for little from any one source.

I wonder if you could beg a little for us in America? Ten dollars would give a substantial meal to sixty children as the cooking would be done in the college.

I hate worrying you. But I know if you were here you would be as bad a beggar in the cause of these starving children as I am!

Contributions may be sent, preferably, to the Reverend Felix M. Kirsch, O.M.Cap., Capuchin College, Brookland, Washington, D. C., or to me: Collegio S. Lorenzo, Assisi, Perugia, Italy.

FATHER CUTHBERT, O.M.CAP.

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THE PLAY

By RICHARD DANA SKINNER

Success Story

FOR SEVERAL reasons, John Howard Lawson's "Success Story" can be set down as the first thoroughly important contribution of the present theatrical season. In the first place, Lawson is one of our most important dramatists. In the second place, the present play is offered by the Group Theatre, which is one of our most interesting theatrical experiments, both in the type of plays offered and in the background effort placed behind their productions. It also happens, fortunately, that "Success Story" has many of the elements of a very fine play. It fails lamentably to live up to its best promises, and the ending is turgid and misshapen. But it is at least as interesting through its faults as its strong points, and that is rare in recent plays.

Lawson, it will be remembered, is the author of "Processional," that raucous play in modernistic tempo and technique which the Theatre Guild produced many seasons back. "Processional" was a mad outpouring of the former jazz age, a study in vivid contrasts and thumping rhythm, with a strong theme of crime and punishment ending in a rumor of unborn greatness to emerge from the insensate whirl. It was distinctly a stage allegory. It showed that Lawson had both the reporter's instinct for summing up the characteristics of his time and the poet's intuition of things still to come. It was brutal both in language and scene, but it was also tender in its understanding of the havoc wrought by mental confusion.

Since "Processional," and up to the production of the present play, Lawson has been a keen disappointment. One expected, and had a right to expect, that he would follow the rumor of the last scene of "Processional" with a realization of that rumor. A playwright can seldom pass beyond the limits of his own psychological make-up. In fact, the more he is a poet, the more a playwright uses the theatre to work out some of his own interior and hidden problems; even, at times, those problems which he hardly recognizes as his own but which fascinate him for the very reason that they are stirring him beneath the surface of his conscious motives and decisions. No matter how much he insists that his interest in this or that subject is purely objective, the very fact that his interest is sufficient to make him write a play about it shows that it bears some intimate relation to his own personal ambitions, hopes or fears. For this reason, and granting Lawson the right to be called a poet of the theatre, the problem of what might grow out of "Processional's" confusion really boiled down to what might grow out of Lawson's own mind as his instincts and judgment matured. Instead of forging ahead, however, Lawson produced a play called "Nirvana," which was a dirge of defeat and hopelessness, of a vague longing for some place of annihilation where there would be no more problems to be settled and no further need for a disciplined will. "Processional" was like watching a strong swimmer nearing shore in a swirling sea. "Nirvana" was like watching this same swimmer suddenly weaken and drown.

The chief trouble with "Success Story" (a wholly ironic title, by the way) is the rather un-obvious one that Lawson has simply side-stepped the problems raised, but not solved, in "Processional" and "Nirvana," and has jumped ahead to the problem of soaring egotism. Naturally, not having solved the problem of his earlier plays, he is unable to solve this new problem. He builds it up splendidly, with excellent pace and characterization, but finds himself blocked in the last act. There are times during the first two acts when one feels the approach of real tragedy, in spite of the untragic proportions and occupations of the leading characters. That is because their motives attain a universal scale. But the last act jumbles both characters and motives.

It is almost inconceivable that an author could build a tragic atmosphere around the executives of an advertising agency. But that is just where Lawson's superior sense of human intensity, regardless of occupation and environment, achieves a *tour de force*. The ambition of a radical young Jewish clerk in a large advertising agency, the way in which he uses the tools of his trade to forge a destiny with all the intensity and unscrupulous zeal of a Napoleon, and his final overthrow through childishly uncontrolled passions are all grist of the finest quality for Lawson's human mill. One forgets the banality of the trade in the vigor of its use for personal power. The neurotic Sol Ginsberg, admirably played by Luther Adler, becomes a symbol of predatory egotism. He is far larger, in all he represents, than the actual field in which he lives and works. So is the East Side secretary who loves him, and has to watch him as he slowly and by relentless stages strangles his soul. They are true figures of the tragic stage, of feverishly sick ambition on the one hand and of passionate but clear-sighted devotion on the other.

But every now and then the unfortunate details obtrude themselves. This is not a Napoleon, nor a Mark Antony, nor even a Joseph Suss Oppenheimer managing the destinies of a mediaeval principality. It is merely a neurotic ghetto boy working up from clerk to head of an advertising agency, building on his boss's misfortunes and coining money which a worthless wife throws away. In other words, Mr. Lawson has selected too cramped a frame for his picture, and the picture itself is too full of circumstantial detail to retain at all times its universal feeling. Then, too, in the last act, it is not Sol Ginsberg's ambition which breaks on the rocks. It is his hopeless inability to cope with his own childish love instincts which makes him seek to hold the sensual love of his wife and to demand at the same time the unselfish and womanly devotion of the girl he once loved on the East Side. Because she loves him so much, this girl tries to fight him off and save him from his own distorted longings. She also wants to save herself from needless torture. Involuntarily, she shoots him. Thus the play ends as a result of the secondary and not the primary problem. The problem of vaulting pride remains unsolved. The tragedy, such as it is, is not born of the larger but of the smaller conflict. Quite true, it is born of the main character, but from his muddiest and most confused aspects, and not from his major development.

Stella Adler as the secretary is almost as good as Luther Adler in the main rôle. Franchot Tone as the head of the agency, Morris Cornovsky as a wise old Jewish banker with few illusions, and Dorothy Patten as the woman whose personal charms fascinate Ginsberg into a miserable marriage, all contribute mightily to a smooth and effective performance which shows the best results of the Group Theatre's method of long summer rehearsals. There is better play construction here, for two acts, than anything Lawson has done before. But unless and until he surmounts the obstacle of his own unwillingness to face and solve completely the issues he raises in his plays he will never achieve that eminence to which his technical writing ability and his power of characterization might lead him. (At Maxine Elliott's Theatre.)

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BOOKS

Life in the Orient

Awakening Japan: The Diary of a German Doctor, Erwin Baelz; edited by Taku Baelz; translated by Eden and Cedar Paul. New York: Viking Press. $5.00.

DR. ERWIN BAELZ'S diaries open a flood of vivid memories. Translated and published by his son under the title "Awakening Japan," they not only paint a living picture of the character of a fine scientist and a very noble man, to whom Japan owes more than to any other foreigner, but also, from the intimate insight a physician may possess in such high degree, the evolution of Japan's whole "modern" period.

In 1896, Japan was just recovering balance from the "Westernizing" excesses entered in the seventies. Reaction against excessive Westernizing was a part cause of the great Satsuma rebellion; from then on the pendulum swung (precariously for European instructors) up into the nineties with considerable passion on both sides, but with constant growth of national consolidation in the process.

From the very beginning of that movement Europeans were drawn in to teach those things their particular nations seemed to the Japanese to have developed best. Medicine was German without competition and the medical faculty was built up by well-selected Germans. It was thus that Dr. Baelz was brought out to Japan in 1876, already distinguished at twenty-seven years, both in clinical practice and in teaching.

In these diaries Baelz is one of the few foreigners who has not dressed up, in the light of later and maturer knowledge, those first impressions of a people that no Westerner could possibly grasp adequately until he had made some progress not only in the language but in their thought processes. He has left them as he wrote them. I have always regretted that Sir Ernest Satow did not do the same by his own romantic boyhood in an even earlier Japan. Baelz as a scientist has let them stand; Sir Ernest as a statesman probably could not, in the strict rules of the conventions of his era. The German's therefore, maturing as he recorded his observations, is the best record yet published by any of us who tried to build something solid in the East, preserving the ancient cultures while utilizing what seemed appropriate of Western methods, or of Western ideas. He stood for absorption by Japan of the things needed for true evolution—not ever for absorption of Japan into a Western whirlpool which even fifty years ago was beginning to menace destruction first to the outer world, then to itself.

I regret that just when I was beginning to appreciate Dr. Erwin Baelz in Tokyo, the new McKinley administration scattered our legation before I had been in Japan a full year. What attracted me to Baelz first was that he had seen, as very few Europeans could see in the awkward transformation period, the identity of the old Japanese standards of conduct which they were throwing to the winds, with the old European code of chivalry which had long since been forgotten. Baelz was the only one with whom one could even discuss such things. He understood that ethical identity. He records it among his first understanding perceptions of their true character under the pseudo-European veneer.

It was for that reason, deliberately, that he revived the ancient knightly games for his students, over the scandalized protests of the university authorities, who had begun to look rather complacently on the new rage for intensive study in the schools resulting in not a few casualties from overwork, and a quite general deterioration of physique as well as of morale.

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NEXT WEEK

Politics and yet more politics, for what are they but an expression in the concrete of the natural human instinct to create a good order of things. Though enlightened or unenlightened selfishness distorts the final results and confusion becomes confoundedly bad, still the individual man who has not given himself up to a settled melancholy struggles on. Charles Willis Thompson, former reporter and editor for the New York *Times* and the *Tribune* will have something to say after looking over present opposing tendencies, estimating their weights and figuring out the direction of the probable resultant. . . . WHERE LIES RELIEF, by William Franklin Sands inquires into fundamentals that are none the less real because they are large and important. Very likely many of the ills of the world can be traced to a mistaken idea induced by the physical sciences that nothing is real except small, immediate things, and that large things are merely a figment of the imagination, a rhetorical synthesis. The practical up-to-date man prides himself on always dealing with small immediate issues "on their individual merits" and mistrusting principle—and now we are swept by a whirlwind of confusion. Mr. Sands contributes to the reestablishment of sanity, or a common core of accepted principles. . . . MR. ELIOT RETURNS, by George N. Shuster, exposes to the critical eye the poet whose poem of disillusionment "easily became the battle hymn of the post-war intellegentsia," and looks about at what a poet is. . . . ONE CATHOLIC DAILY, by Stuart D. Goulding, describes a highly successful Catholic newspaper which is Puritan-owned and suggests some interesting possibilities.

Baelz certainly wanted medical students, and ultimately physicians and surgeons of the highest technical training. Equally certainly he produced them—but he wanted healthy minded, healthy bodied men and above all, a chivalrous man himself in his whole being, he could not bear the destruction of chivalry in the only people he knew who still possessed its meaning. That preservation of ideals and standards from destruction by their ruthless sacrifice to Western materialism belongs to his major achievements and is (I venture to say) more definitely his work than that of any of Japan's own statesmen, for he brought to its accomplishment the full equipment of a great scientist, which none of them could possess at that time.

His medical and scientific work, his cures, have passed into saga among the Japanese people. His understanding knowledge of myths, of folk-lore, even of superstition, gave him a miracle-working reputation in the new field of psychiatry.

The comfortable traveler in the spas and health resorts of Japan has no conception of the amount of physical labor, knowledge, tact and pertinacity combined with business shrewdness devoted by Baelz to their development during forty years—primarily for the purpose of building up the lowered national physique which puzzled him at first so greatly in an old warrior people. His experiments in diet and its relation to fatigue and endurance, not in our cold-blooded efficiency scheme of getting more work out of a man, but for the general purpose of rebuilding a hardy people, are a monument to him in themselves.

Japanese of an older generation know very well what they owe to him in the preservation of the dynasty itself, for it was his devoted care that made it possible for the imperial heir to grow to manhood, to marry and to continue the line of succession. Each one of these things, each a satisfactory life's work for one man, for each of which a memorial would not come amiss, were all only parts of his general purpose: the preservation of all that was delicate and noble in the old Japanese culture against the attacks of Western materialism; the absorption of applied science into that ancient structure in measured doses till evolution had taken place in orderly process; the simultaneous physical rebuilding of a people decimated by secular war and disease, to bear capably a vigorous new civilization in the world, combined out of all that was best in both conflicting and incompatible ideologies. In 1876, this German scientist set himself to this task, according to definite principles which Dr. William Ernest Hocking of Harvard has just now pointed out ("The Spirit of World Politics") as the right guide to evolution of the mandate system of the League of Nations.

That was the work of a great statesman, a great scientist. I wonder how many Japanese will disagree with me, when I say that Erwin Baelz deserves a place among their own elder statesmen. One, very highly placed in Japanese official life, a successful statesman himself, told me recently that he had never read anything which gave him more knowledge of his own people than this story of Dr. Baelz's "Awakening Japan."

WILLIAM FRANKLIN SANDS.

From Lindisfarne to London

English Painting, by Charles Johnson. New York: The Dial Press. $5.00.

THIS book of criticism, by the official lecturer at the National Gallery, is characterized by sound taste. He tries to avoid impulsive condemnation of the new or, on the other hand, gulping down the new and hating the old through fear of being thought reactionary. He succeeds in steering the middle course of critical propriety. His history of English painting

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proceeds from the earliest manuscript drawings for the Lindisfarne Gospels of the seventh century right down to the new movements of today, as exemplified in the highly original work of Paul Nash and Stanley Spencer.

Mr. Johnson devotes his first four chapters to manuscript illuminations and wall paintings, describing the ingenuity and grace of Saxon and the solidity of Norman painting, which merged into the various phases of Gothic painting. He takes up successively Tudor and Stuart portraits and then those of Hogarth, Gainsborough and Reynolds. He observes justly that the English love of freshness and delicacy, first visible in the pen washes of the illuminators, is the same propulsive force that gives such charm to the greatest achievement of English painting, the water-color landscapes of the nineteenth century.

Although Mr. Johnson is adequately appreciative of the merits of the water-color school from Sandby to Girtin, he does not do justice to Sargent, perhaps because the number of Sargent aquarelles in England is not large. Sargent, I believe, will live on account of his fine, bold and (in his day) unconventional water-colors, as well as a few fine portraits. Mr. Johnson appears to believe that water-color is exclusively a tidy medium, which it no longer is.

There is perhaps little else in this informative volume of which the eager student might complain. A right touch has located the deft swirl Hogarth gave to his brush in light, liquid impasto—for the high lights of costume, etc.—as taken over from Guardi. And Mr. Johnson gives a generous meed of attention to Richard Wilson, father of English landscape painting, and Turner, the mammoth of English painters.

To the Cozzenses, to Girtin, Crome, Constable, and Cotman, he allots also their due. He is rightly eloquent over Alfred Stevens, probably the greatest English portraitist of the nineteenth century. He naturally deplores the too literary pieces of the nineteenth-century historical painters. Whenever an artist starts out, like Wilson Steer, with a number of influences on his back, Mr. Johnson follows them up but points out the essential originality of the painter still. So he capably appreciates what Sickert, Sir Charles Holmes and Sir George Clausen have done today.

JAMES W. LANE.

Can Capitalism Survive?

The Way Forward, by Robert S. Brookings. New York: The Macmillan Company. $1.00.

Capitalism, Coöperation, Communism, by Andrew J. Kress. Washington: Ransdell Incorporated. $2.00.

TO THE rather trite question, "Can capitalism survive?", these authors answer in the affirmative. But our muddled oligarchy of haphazard, profit-seeking management must go. Mr. Brookings would force the abdication by placing the voting control of the corporation in the hands of its active staff, labor and managers. Thus, common stock control now assigned by mail to be voted by an irresponsible proxy committee of a self-perpetuating board of directors would be abolished. The unseated stockholders, if their certificates represent any actual investment, would receive bonds or preferred stock, yielding a limited, fixed return. Consequently, the holders of the labor shares, substituted for the old common shares, would divide whatever earnings remained after paying operating expenses, and interest and preferred dividends to the propertied security holders. It is expected that this plan would enlist the full coöperation of labor and management. New Zealand has provided enabling legislation for this scheme. Certainly it is pref-

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erable to other attempts to enlist employee interest, such as the discredited employee stock ownership drives; and it seems to offer some consolation to the mourners of the late "high wages" doctrine. Furthermore, it may well appeal to the common stockholders as an attractive alternative to their present ownership position, legally strong but economically powerless.

Doctor Kress proposes nothing as radical as the Brookings scheme. Instead, he treats the reader to an optative description of all the familiar virtues of the coöperative movement: retail and wholesale distribution, which has placed marmelade within the reach of every Britisher; agriculture producers' association illustrated by the affluence of that bucolic commonwealth, Denmark; credit unions such as that which has rescued our postal clerks from the loan sharks and placed the mortgage on the old plantation in the kind hands of Uncle Sam. After this effort the author finds it difficult to engage his subject; for example, the reader looks in vain for an answer to the question, "Why has the coöperative movement not saved European nations from the hardships of economic derangement, or to what extent has this desideratum been realized?" The reader is let down with weakly supported conclusions, most of them in the future tense. However, social reform is necessarily vague.

Both these plans, labor shares and coöperation would be inapplicable to new industries and methods. None would risk his capital on such schemes as the generation of electricity by rotor, or the enlargement of Keeley cures, were the contingent prize, a common stock bonus, abolished. Similarly, coöperation has trailed the promoter, everywhere economizing and systematizing, but never pioneering.

These two books for all their utopian shortcomings are timely. Now, while the captain of industry is "punch drunk," and his self-centered, skilled labor force is about to "go on the county," everyone is receptive to change. The autocrat may welcome a chance to share with his skeleton labor force his now undisputed sway over a rusting wilderness. So too, his operatives and their furloughed neighbors may be attentive to the petty economies of coöperative store and credit union.

GEORGE K. MCCABE.

The Dreadful Days

Liberty: The Story of Cuba, by Horatio S. Rubens. New York: Brewer, Warren and Putnam, Incorporated. $2.50.

BECAUSE Mr. Rubens was an important personage in the Spanish-American War and the events that preceded it, he has been able to give to this episode in our history a new significance. He has attempted a more dramatic task than merely setting down his memories. He has essayed to debunk the debunkers of the war of 1898. As attorney for the Cuban revolutionary exiles in this country just before the struggle, he had to defend them when they were prosecuted under our neutrality laws. Thus he was in close touch with the sentiments of the man in the street, not only in the large cities but also in small towns, the obscure South Atlantic ports and industrial towns where, as witnesses and jurymen, American citizens revealed their strong compassion for the oppressed subjects of Spain. Mr. Rubens resents the tendency of writers to label this deep-felt sympathy as simply one of the results of Mr. Hearst's yellow journalism and jingoism. It seems to this reviewer that he makes a convincing case for the existence of a great mass feeling which latter-day cynics have minimized—genuine American sympathy for oppressed small nations.

The chapter entitled "The Art of Filibustering" is one of the most interesting. The author quite evidently knows his

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Latin-Americans: the sincere idealism of patriots like José Martí, the father of Cuban independence, as well as the low cunning of picturesque Caribbean war-lords. Mr. Rubens was more than legal counsel during those strenuous and adventurous pre-war days of gun-running and filibustering expeditions. He was a fellow plotter and as such has much of interest to tell about the hairbreadth escapes and ludicrous failures of such enterprises. He gave Stephen Crane the opportunity to join the disastrous expedition which inspired the immortal "Open Boat." Crane relating to him the story of that famous shipwreck gave an amusing picture of one bombastic filibuster: "He reminded me of Washington: first in war, first in peace, and first—in the boats."

But "Liberty" contains more than diverting anecdotes and reminiscences. Future historians will have to recognize the importance of this volume as a source book on this period. Figures and deeds of Cuban patriots, intimate knowledge of McKinley's vacillation, the inside story of the famous De Lome letter, some precious Rooseveltiana which have escaped biographers of the redoubtable Teddy and impressive source material of the pre-war days in Cuba—all these are reasons why this book is just as important as it is entertaining.

FRANK C. HANIGHEN.

Platonic

The Fountain, by Charles Morgan. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.

CERTAINLY intelligent readers of fiction cannot overlook "The Fountain"; certainly, too, their judgment, agreeing on many of the book's excellences, will be in conflict based on variance of philosophy. The Catholic, for one, might agree with Plato that "if any life at all is worth living," it is that led "in the contemplation of absolute Beauty." But he would go further, he would define "absolute Beauty." The Puritan, for another, will question the amoral treatment of a love which, however natural or beautiful, is adulterous and, aside from any moral code, offensive to the honor inherent in the hero. Nevertheless, "The Fountain," subtly it is true but none the less forcibly, points a moral. Lewis Alison and Julie Narwitz suffer a refinement of punishment for their sin. The tragedy comes not with the ending of a beautiful interlude but with the inexorable binding together of their thoughts and lives by Rupert Narwitz on his deathbed.

Important as the novel is, it misses greatness. This is possibly because it is fictionally conceived and too much of the coldness and aloofness of the intellect obviates its rooting in reality. No matter how Mr. Morgan stresses the sincerity, the completeness and the importance of Alison's search for the true secret of contemplative life, the reader is emotionally unaffected by his impulse to that search. In like manner he must accept Narwitz who has penetrated farther, who pronounces (let the metaphysicians dispute!): "When loss is freedom, then we are baptized in wonder and are fit to die," and himself espouses death in a scene which has all the incredibility of "La Traviata's" finale.

Mr. Morgan's descriptions are of intense, often poignant, beauty. His prose moves with smoothness and stateliness. He has been exceptionally wise in his selection of those details with which he has built up his characters, and the reader will not soon forget the old Dutch baron, the baroness, Ballater, Ramsdell and Sophie. Again the author has, without deploying stock devices, arranged his climaxes with dramatic force.

JOHN GILLAND BRUNINI.

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Briefer Mention

Democratic Ideas in Turgenev's Works, by Harry Hershkowitz. New York: Columbia University Press. $1.50.

MUCH attention has recently been given to the nationalistic and social influences of the Romantic Movement upon modern Russian literature. In his careful, moderate and well-informed study, Dr. Hershkowitz is especially concerned with Turgenev's awareness of the serf problem. How the great novelist deepened and extended his interest in this fateful problem is studied against the background of his books. These are seen to stress the Russian aristocratic and peasant "types" in whom the reform mood successively expressed itself. The social conditions of the time and the growth of Turgenev himself are likewise briefly surveyed. This is an important study which the historian and critic of modern fiction should not ignore.

Poetry, by John Masefield. New York: The Macmillan Company. $1.00.

"YOU cannot have supreme thought save as the tall flowers rising from a great mass of thought," Mr. Masefield says excellently in this lecture, delivered less to define the mistress of the arts than to give the public a sense of what boon to expect from her. There follows a brief excursus upon four major poets — Homer, Aeschylus, Dante, Shakespeare. Perhaps one of the most effective among several fine passages is that in which Mr. Masefield comments upon Dante's planning and building: "A work so based, so built and lifted, is surely the greatest triumph so far achieved by a poet." But this is an excellent lecture indeed, which adds memorable speech to our store of poetic criticism.

The First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians; edited by E. J. Bicknell. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, Incorporated. $2.75.

THIS volume, one of the Westminster Commentaries, affords a detailed but still non-technical and readable edition of two important Pauline Epistles by a professor of exegesis who writes from the Anglo-Catholic point of view. Notable is the thorough and intelligent concern with modern scholarship, which the editor handles in masterly fashion. Excepting possibly one or two minor details, the book seems wholly acceptable to Catholics and should come into wide use. The text, to be sure, is that of the Revised Version.

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